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Twenty-five articles describing techniques for teaching English are organized under four headings: language, literature, composition, and miscellany. Included in the language section are discussions of an oral language program for 3- to 5-year-old disadvantaged children, of language development through creative dramatics, of a junior high school program requiring students to match language to purpose, and of approaches to an in-depth study of American English. The section on literature presents plans for an independent reading program, techniques for teaching poetry, methods of studying drama and presenting dramatizations, a program on book evaluation and rating, and guides for organizing a class library. The composition section includes techniques for making writing more pleasurable, for combining composition and speech, for guiding collaboration in student writing, for using newspapers to teach organization and slides to teach imagery, for developing humor in composition, and for helping remedial writers overcome feelings of inferiority. The last section includes descriptions of a project aimed at teaching recognition of order and form in speaking and writing, a nongraded senior high language arts program, a Program of Individualized English Methods, and the use of mechanical teaching aids. (LH)

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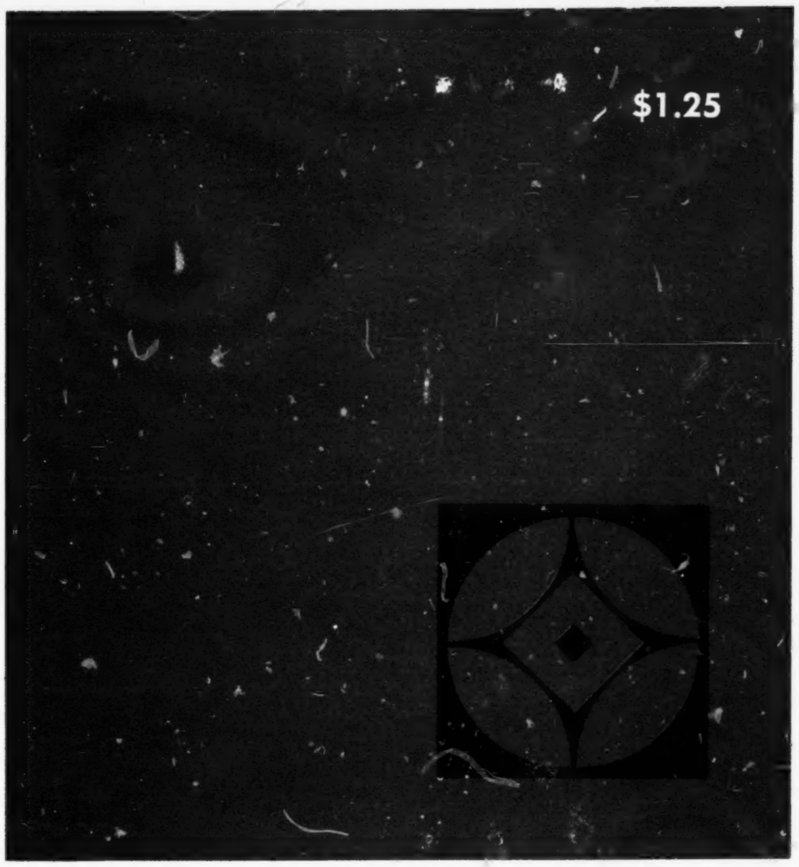
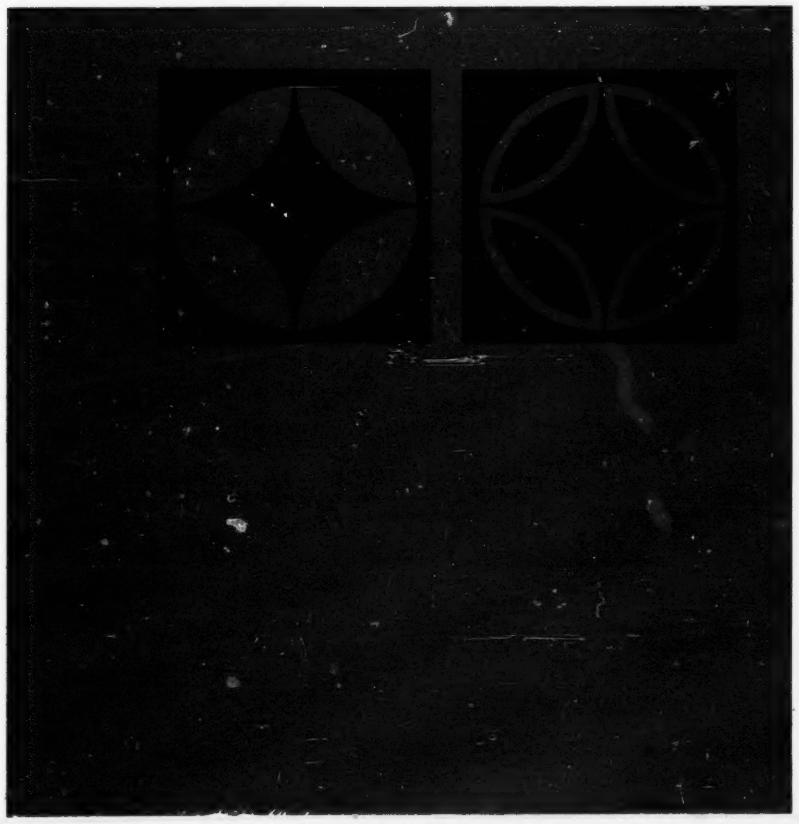


CLASSROOM PRACTICES in Teaching English

A Sixth Report of the NCTE Committee on Promising Practices

Cochairmen: A. J. Beeler and Donald W. Emery



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CLASSROOM PRACTICES in Teaching English
1968-1969

A Sixth Report of the NCTE Committee on Promising Practices

Cochairmen: A. J. Beeler and Donald W. Emery

National Council of
Teachers of English

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INTRODUCTION

The NCTE Committee on Promising Practices in the Teaching of English has developed a working definition to sharpen the focus of its search for practices to describe in its annual report: Practices should be innovative but not "gimmicky"; they may be somewhat familiar to some teachers, but new to others; they should be sufficiently extensive in the development of ideas to show how rationale and activities match. The Committee also agreed to use the terms *English* and *language arts* interchangeably for the purpose of its publication; regardless of the title, listening, thinking, observing, speaking, reading, literature, language, and composition are all interactively involved.

The Committee has also agreed upon the following value assumptions as guidelines in the selection of materials:

> Education should be designed to support individuality and to allow for individual differences in motivation, pace, and style of learning.
>
> It is desirable that students learn to learn for themselves rather than for the teacher or for extrinsic rewards.
>
> Active learning and evaluation of their progress by the students are necessary conditions for significant learning.
>
> Language learning and the use and enjoyment of language are innate, creative human capacities. Language becomes a means of communicating thought and feeling. The creative aspect of language should be encouraged.
>
> The teacher must take the responsibility for choosing the kinds of materials and situations appropriate for the pupils in his class.
>
> There is no best sequence of learning nor an ultimate best structure of knowledge. Students should be helped to structure their own learning and to become aware of alternative structures and sequences.

In choosing articles for this year's report the Committee considered the processes of learning and the curriculum implications of new ways of thinking about language as well as curriculum content.

All of these facts were considered by members of the Committee. From a very large number of articles submitted, the Committee chose twenty-five to be included in this bulletin. The articles range from approximately one hundred words to forty-five hundred words in length; they cover all phases of the language arts and are aimed at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. The Committee hopes that readers of the report will read all articles, since many of the promising practices described may be adapted for various grade levels. For purposes of organization the articles have been grouped into four categories: Language, Literature, Composition, and Miscellany. Many of the articles touch upon more than one phase of the language arts. A brief introduction precedes each section.

The Committee particularly wishes to remind its readers that these articles are offered to broaden their own opportunities to make informed choices. No practice reported here can be used exactly as described by a different teacher with different students. Each teacher may adapt and use any aspects of these practices that fit into his own view of teaching and learning. The members of the Committee hope that each reader will feel encouraged to try out something he has not done before.

The cochairmen wish to thank all who have contributed to the work of the Committee and to the publication. They are especially grateful to Marie B. Dickinson, Sister Philippa Coogan, Edward R. Fagan, and Albert L. Lavin, who with them read and evaluated all manuscripts considered.

A. J. Beeler
Donald W. Emery
Cochairmen

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I. LANGUAGE

LANGUAGE

This section consists of four articles which stress particularly the study of language per se to increase communication proficiency.

"An Oral Language Program for Early Childhood" describes a project of the staff of the New Nursery School, Greeley, Colorado, which has been in progress since October, 1964. The author describes in detail a compensatory oral language program which should have broad implications for readers of this publication.

"Language Change and Creative Drama" is an account of the effectiveness of creative drama as a vehicle for language development and underscores the place of oral language in the English curriculum.

"Role Playing for Language Development" describes a junior high school program which, according to the author, "requires the student to develop a viewpoint, determine a purpose, and then to develop a set of language which reflects these variables." Examples to prove the thesis make this idea seem workable and realistic.

"On the Teaching of American English," written by a college professor but describing procedures which might be effective at all grade levels, presents both theory and practice involved with a study in depth of American language. Particularly helpful is the large number of excellent examples from a wide variety of sources.

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AN ORAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

The traditional school curriculum has been based upon the assumption that the child has acquired a fundamental knowledge of his language before he starts to school.

Because most children with whom the school has been concerned enter school with an almost complete mastery of an oral language (comprehension and production), the program of oral language development in most nursery schools, kindergartens, and elementary schools has evolved with those children in mind.

For some children, a language program designed to help refine (agreement of subject and predicate, elimination of double negatives) and extend (vocabulary enlargement) their comprehension and expression of the spoken word is adequate. For all too many children, however, such a program is woefully inadequate. The child at age five who does *not* have an average vocabulary of 2,072 words, as studies have shown to be "average," (5) is simply lost in such a situation. He falls further and further behind. Many compensatory programs, if they do anything in the nature of language development, simply intensify, or start earlier, the traditional language programs in the school. But "by simply doing 'more of the same harder' we will hardly dent the problem." (11)

A year of encouraging the child to express himself, such as one finds in most middle-class oriented nursery schools, or another year of kindergarten or first grade work is not going to give the disadvantaged child what he needs in the way of language development. The workbooks, pictures, and reliance upon home and neighborhood experiential background to provide meaning have not worked with the disadvantaged child. The language deficit that exists when the child enters school not only tends to persist, it actually increases with each year he stays in school. A compensatory oral language program, suited to the age and experiential background of the child, is a necessity for children with a language inadequate for school success.

Since October, 1964, the staff of the New Nursery School, Greeley, Colorado, have been working with three- to five-year-old disadvantaged Spanish-surnamed children. These children have all the characteristics of a minority group: different skin color, different culture, economic and social problems, and most important for some, a different language. Most of them are bilingual, which in this situation means they do not have an adequate command of either English or Spanish. Colloquially, the language they speak is referred to as "Tex-Mex" or "Spanglish." An analysis of these deficits is beyond the scope of this article, but perhaps the most important is the lack of any language precise enough and extended enough to be used as a tool for the thought processes—for labeling, forming concepts, solving problems, making associations, and retrieving information. It is this type of language the children do not have—in either a "native" language or "standard English."

To meet the needs of these children, the New Nursery School has approached the question of language development in several ways. Appropriate audiovisual materials, such as telephones, typewriters, cartridge tape recorders, and Language-Masters are used extensively. Traditional nursery school and kindergarten activities, such as art, reading, music, manipulative toy and block play, have been examined to develop ways of enhancing language development. This development should take place in an early childhood classroom *which is responsive to the young child's needs, interests, and abilities.* While it is obvious to all who work with young environmentally deprived children that their greatest deprivation lies in the intellectual realm, including language, the responsible teacher and administrator cannot ignore the children's physical, social, and emotional growth. Young children need to be active, to move about, to enjoy learning; they need learning situations which can be individualized or used with small groups of interested children. They need language development which permeates the total program and is not set apart from or simply added to the regular curriculum.

Three aspects of the New Nursery School program will be discussed in this article:

I. The teacher's language as a model.
II. The teacher as an active listener who reflects (echoes) and extends the child's speech.

III. A planned sequential program of language development and concept formation; concentrating on words the children have the most trouble using, plus words which carry the most meaning for the thought processes, such as "same"-"different," "with"-"without," "on"-"off," "and"-"or," "is"-"is not."

I. If the teacher is to be a model for the children, he should be quite aware of what he says and how he says it. (9) This does not mean, of course, that the child is subjected to a barrage of words. It is the right words at the right time that are important.

A. *Use the sentence as the basic unit of speech.* If a child asks, "Hay tees?" (What's this), answer, "That is a giraffe" rather than "A giraffe." Say "This is a fireman's hat" rather than "A fireman's hat." Although for most of us the words "a giraffe" or "a fireman's hat" constitute an acceptable sentence, they do nothing to indicate the speech patterns of standard English, which disadvantaged children need as much as they need words for labeling.

B. *Whenever possible, include the category or classification in the sentence,* such as "That *animal* is a guinea pig" or "That *color* is yellow. This *color* is blue." After many experiences with things colored yellow, blue, and pink, experiences accompanied by sentences such as "That color is yellow," the child can begin to generalize, to classify, to form a concept of "color."

After many experiences with rabbits, ponies, guinea pigs, gerbils, and kittens, experiences accompanied by sentences such as "The rabbit is an animal" or "This animal is a guinea pig," the child can begin to form a concept of "animal."

Although, "a concept is not a word . . . words are a greater help than other kinds of symbols in building up the understanding which we call a concept." (15)

C. *Use specific descriptive words rather than nonspecific relative pronouns, pronouns, and other overly general terms.* If a child indicates that he wants a particular toy (and the word "indicates" is used intentionally here; many of these children have no functional language at all), the teacher can say, "The pegs are on the bottom shelf beside the puzzles." Gestures can be used, if necessary, to make the meaning clear.

Contrast the learning possibilities in the preceding example with a reply that might be given to guide the child to the same box of pegs. The child indicates or asks for the pegs; the teacher points in the general direction and replies, "Right over there."

Say, "The crayons go in the cabinet below the window," rather than, "They go in there."

Say, "The puzzle piece is on the floor under your chair," rather than, "There it is."

D. *Give the child enough information to keep him from becoming confused.* Children who do not have the color names and the concept of color will be confused if the teacher talks about "yellow" and "red" instead of "yellow paint" and "red crayons." José, painting at the easel, asked the teacher for more "yellow." The teacher looked at his paint supply, then said, "Why José, you have plenty of yellow." "No, not that yellow," he said, pointing to the yellow paint. "This yellow," pointing to the blue paint.

Children who do not have the descriptive vocabulary and the concept of texture will be confused by such statements as "This is rough; this is smooth." Help the child by naming the substance as well as describing its properties or attributes. Say, "The sandpaper is rough; the board is smooth."

E. *In activities involving "matching," it is far more important for the children to see and be able to say HOW things match.* Do they have the same color, same shape, same length, sound, or what? The teacher can aid the child by making the distinction in his speech. If a child groups all the red toys he can find, the teacher can say, "Yes, the toys are all the *same color*, red," rather than, "Yes, they all match." If a child working puzzles points excitedly to the wheel of the locomotive, the orange, and a circle, the teacher can say, "The wheel, the orange, and the circle all have the *same shape*."

For the purposes of thinking, it is equally important that the child be able to see and say how two objects do *not* match. If a child playing a Color-Lotto game, for example, picks out an orange square instead of a red square, he can, with the adult's help, decide that they are "*not the same color*." Then he can find the square which is the same color as the original.

F. *Be accurate in referring to size, weight, height, and other dimensions of objects.*

For years, teachers and parents have been confusing children by referring to the hands of the clock as "big" and "little." Which hand is "big"—the long, narrow hand or the short, broad hand? They might easily have the same measured surface area. Far more accurate and easier for the child to comprehend are the terms "longer" and "shorter."

Likewise, the teacher who asks a child to point to the "biggest building in the picture" when he means "the tallest building" is confusing the child who has a beginning concept of "biggest" and misinforming the child who has no concept of "biggest." In their eagerness to have children make comparisons, teachers sometimes ask unanswerable questions, such as "Which is bigger, a giraffe or a hippopotamus?" Objects of disparate form and structure, such as block buildings, are usually impossible to classify as larger or smaller. They are better compared as longer, taller, wider, or shorter than another building.

". . . We teachers must begin to look at our ideas and our teaching through the eyes of someone who knows nothing. . . . We must try to free our teaching from ambiguity, confusion, and self-contradiction." (7)

II. The actively listening adult can provide the child a model for his groping and inexact communications and can extend the thought to include other related ideas. The word "communications" is used here instead of speech because gestures, looks, attitude of body, and facial expressions, as well as speech, are all communications which can be given verbal interpretation by the teacher. If a child comes up and wordlessly sticks out one of his new shoes, the teacher can interpret the nonverbal "conversation" by saying, "I see your new red shoes. They are the same color as your shirt." Basing a portion of the language program upon the child's ideas is a guarantee of interest and meaningfulness.

The reflection or echo procedure goes like this: The child tries to express himself; the adult gets the meaning and reflects it back to him in standard English. For example, if the child says, "Hus got one dem flowers, dem Sanna Claus . . . our house," while he is examining the Christmas tree, the adult can say, "You have a Christmas tree at your house, too."

If a child indignantly complains, "Ea-ahhee-e-e-me uh," and then makes noises imitating a truck, the adult can sympathize by acknowledging, "Yes, I saw Elias hit you with a truck."

Obviously, this technique does not work in all instances. Personal pronouns cannot be properly incorporated, and often the adult cannot understand what the child is trying to say, no matter how hard they both try. However, the technique provides the child with a model without the discouraging aspects of a direct correction. When the child hears the teacher echo his sentence, he is usually pleased that the teacher has understood and is interested in what he has to say, and he is motivated to continue.

In the extension procedure the adult uses the child's original expression as the basis for formulating another related statement.

"You have a Christmas tree at your house, too. Some of the children are making decorations for the tree. You can make some for our tree and some to take home to put on your tree."

"Yes, I saw Elias hit you with a truck. If you and Elias move your roads farther apart, then you won't hit each other. Let me help you."

If a child points to an orange and a red Cuisenaire rod and says, "Him beeg, Him lee-all (little)," the teacher can reply, "The orange rod is longer than the red rod, and the red rod is shorter than the orange rod."

The extension provides the child with models of varied and elaborated speech elements, which recent research has shown to enhance language development. (4, 13)

III. In addition, the child needs to have the meaning, understanding, and use of many more words.

There is much division of opinion on how this should be done, and little evidence on the effectiveness of any technique—especially as it carries over into the elementary school where increased depth of meaning and flexibility in use of language are expected.

Certain language needs of the children are obvious; many personal pronouns, action verbs, conjunctions, and labels are either misused or missing from the child's vocabulary. Insofar as possible, these have been incorporated into the basic procedures described below. For example, the teachers verbalize appropriate motor activities as the child does them: "Juanita runs down the board." Pictures taken of the children doing these actions are mounted on Language-Master cards and a model sentence recorded. The child can look at the picture, listen to the sentence, and, hopefully, record and listen to his own sentence. Such a sequence would take place over a period of several months.

In addition, the decision of "what to teach" is guided by thinking in terms of basic, useful concepts the children need to form, concepts such as color, size, number, and shape, which can be used as tools for learning. Thinking in this fashion and devising experiences which will help the child form the concept symbolized by the word will guard against rote learning and verbalization. The words and the experiences work together to provide the child with clear and usable concepts.

Some but not all of the concepts we are concerned with are listed below. Some, but not all, of the words which symbolize particular instances of this concept are listed as examples. These examples by no means outline the scope of the program.

A. *The same as* - *different from* (than)

same color as - different color from (than)
same size as - different size from
same length as - different length from
same shape as - different shape from

B. Location or position, including relative and opposing location

in front of
behind (*in back of* is also considered acceptable)
beside
between

up - down
on - off
in - out
inside - outside

C. Relative size

large, larger, largest
small, smaller, smallest
long, longer, longest
short, shorter, shortest
tall, taller, tallest
big, bigger, biggest
little, littler, littlest

D. Contrasting or opposing conditions

and - or
is - is not (and other forms of the negative)
with - without
fast - slow
noisy - quiet
open - close

The ideas which are symbolized by these words are far more difficult for the child to learn than "chair," "cow," or even walking and running. The educational penalty for *not* knowing is far greater.

This program for language development is based upon a three-step process, with transitions from one step to the other.

1. *The child hears the words in a meaningful context and situation.* Since the child's comprehension of language is far ahead of his ability to produce language, language programs should start with activities to build on what comprehension the child has, then establish comprehension of more words, plus understanding of the meaning of those words.

Whenever possible, the child is actively, physically involved in demonstrating the meaning of the words. There is considerable evidence that this results in better learning, especially for the disadvantaged child, who is not as accustomed to learning through words and pictures as his middle-class counterpart, and who does not have the experience background to know what the words and pictures mean. ". . . It would seem essential that the method of teaching formal language to deprived children take advantage of their communication style by employing techniques that stress the physical, the active, as much as possible." (14)

For the teacher this means the use of real objects instead of pictures as the starting point for learning whenever possible. It means letting the children see, feel, put together, take apart, smell, listen to, and perhaps eat as aids to learning language. It means planning learning activities in a way that involves a motor response on the part of the child. For instance, the child can put his hands *in front of* him, *behind* him, and *between* his legs.

A wide variety of situations and word contexts is used so the child does not get the idea that a certain word applies only to the particular instance of it that is given as an example. There is evidence that the introduction of varied grammatical and conceptual elements makes it easier—not harder—for the child to learn. In addition, the use of varied contexts gives the child a more flexible word meaning. The child not only puts his hands *in front of* him, he stands *in front of* another child or his chair, puts one foot *in front of* the other, places an object *in front of* a box, and then finds that the same object can be *behind* the box if he moves around to the other side. The sentence is used as the basic unit of speech to provide some of the variety of word contexts and also to help establish English language patterns.

Oversimplification of word meaning is avoided. Some of the words the children need to learn have nuances of meanings that are almost impossible to define, yet these nuances must be considered in planning the oral language program.

This can happen in several ways. Words can be presented as denoting *more* meaning than they ordinarily do in oral speech. For instance, the word "fat" might be used to mean "broad" or "wide" in an effort to avoid unfamiliar terms, yet the word "fat" is not ordinarily used in that way. The child who learns to express the idea of broad or wide as "fat" will simply have to unlearn it.

Words and word meanings can be presented in a way that ignores differentiations ordinarily made in oral speech. If the words "above" and "below" are used as synonymous with "over" and "under," the child is learning to ignore differentiations which most adult speakers automatically make.

2. *The child says the words in a meaningful context and situation.* Participation cannot be forced. It should be made easy for the child to respond, but never demanded. How can a young child give a verbal response when he does not yet have the confidence or the competence to do so?

A narrow focus on the "right" word should be avoided. There are many different ways of expressing one idea or relationship; as long as the meaning is clear, all these should be encouraged.

The ball that is *beside* the box may also be *next to* the box, *at the side of* the box, *by* the box, *in front of* the teacher, *on* the floor, *on* the rug, *between* George and the box. If a question such as "Where is the ball?" is asked, all the various ways of expressing the location of the ball should be accepted. Indeed, unless the teacher is interested in turning the children into parrots, divergent answers should be encouraged.

Many an older student has been incensed by a teacher whose focus on the "right" answer was so narrow that other responses, equally correct, were unacceptable. The younger child does not have the background or confidence to become indignant—he is merely confused. The teacher who is focusing on a specific relationship can guide the answers toward the desired response without labeling a given response wrong.

"Yes, the ball is *on* the floor. Can you think of another way to say where the ball is? Yes, the ball is *by* the box, Chris. Is there another way you could say that?"

3. *The child extends the meaning and use of the words to other situations* through other experiences–pictures, books, Language-Masters, tape recorders, and so forth. These enable the teacher to provide for extension of knowledge beyond the classroom and for more individualized instruction through audiovisual techniques.

In actual practice the steps are not discrete, but interwoven; the child is often speaking, comprehending, and refining at the same time. Not all children need all of these steps; some children will progress through the steps quite rapidly. Others will require much more time. Provision can be made for all these children through small group and individual work to which the child can come and work at his own speed. Almost all children can benefit from refinement and extension of the word meanings they do have. "An ever present problem of teachers and parents is the confusion of verbalization with true understanding." (15)

The activities and verbal interaction necessary for language development do not have to be set apart from the rest of the day. They should be a part of every activity ("The pegs are *on* the shelf *beside* the nesting cups." "Do you want your cracker *with* or *without* peanut butter?" "*I'll* throw the ball to *you*. Now *you* throw the ball to *me*.") and should be planned for small groups, individuals, and larger groups. The teacher should set up the learning situations to create interest, work with the children while they are interested, and let them go on to something else when they lose interest–perhaps to another activity which is valuable in itself but which will also contribute to development of the child's language and thought.

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LANGUAGE CHANGE AND CREATIVE DRAMA

Creative drama is a powerful medium for developing thought and language. For our children in Hawaii who speak only pidgin, or only a foreign language, or who in some cases come from environments where there is little language of any kind, creative drama has proven an immensely effective vehicle for language development.

Teachers in a recent NCTE preconvention workshop, "Folklore of the Pacific," observed a creative drama class of twenty bright-eyed island children from a nearby school, Kalihi-Uka.[1] The eight-year-olds, though a bit awed by the impressive surroundings and the teachers from Vermont, Florida, Nebraska, Arizona, all over the United States, soon forgot everything except the delight of hearing an ancient Hawaiian folk tale. Almost breathlessly they listened to the story of the dauntless demi-God, Maui, who snared the great Sun God, La, and made him go more slowly across the sky, "so the taro can grow and the tapa can dry."[2] Only Kuulei, of all the Filipino, Japanese, Hawaiian, and "island-mixture" children, had heard the story before, but all were acquainted with Maui and eager to hear another of his adventures. After discussing favorite parts of the story, they set to work, gradually building up, through careful specific planning, the characterization of the Sun God.

"How big is the sun? How does he look? How does he feel as he moves up out of the crater? What are his legs?[3] How can you make them strong? How does he feel when he sees the bananas? How can you show his greediness?"

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[1] The National Convention of the National Council of Teachers of English met in Honolulu over the Thanksgiving weekend, 1967.

[2] This tale is found in many sources, but the writer of this article used her own version which she had adapted for telling in creative drama classes.

[3] In this story, as in other Hawaiian tales, the rays of the sun are called his "legs."

"Are you ready, suns, to sleep in your craters?"

Soon twenty sleeping suns were awakening from the craters in which they had slept, peeping over the edge, looking cautiously about, then hungrily, greedily, reaching out one long strong leg for the succulent (and imaginary) baked bananas. The absorbed children forgot the unfamiliar room, forgot the observing teachers, forgot even themselves. They became greedy suns and heroic Mauis.

Always, even to someone who sees it happen over and over, there is something mysterious and primeval in this process. Here are twenty eager eight-year-olds, almost overwhelmingly appealing in red, yellow, green, and blue flowered mu'u mu'us and aloha shirts, their bare brown feet as alert and expectant as their minds. Then gradually they imagine their way, feel their way, back through eons of time to become gods and heroes. Here is the magic of theatre in its essence. As the title of the old college acting text says, "Acting Is Believing."

These little islanders did believe. For an hour they lived joyously in Hawaii's misty prehistoric past, and the observing teachers lived with them. One man was so absorbed that he involuntarily called out to the teacher to notice a small convincing Maui who was temporarily overlooked.

After the children in their bright clothing and bright faces had gone, the room seemed sober, almost dull. Many comments and questions came from the teachers as they drank their morning coffee.

"How well they express themselves! They talk with so much expression! What unique ideas! That is thinking of a high level! Delightful children." And significantly and typically, "You chose the especially talented children, didn't you?"

Talent, as always, was no consideration at all in choosing the group. The children taken for this group were those who were not already enrolled in a late afternoon Japanese Language class meeting at the same hour. Later one or two others begged to come and were allowed to enter, after arranging their absence with the Sensei.[4] All the children were third graders from Kalihi-Uka School, a "disadvantaged" area, where language has been a real problem. Most of the children came from pidgin-speaking homes, though some families do not even speak pidgin, only Filipino or, in a few cases, Hawaiian. Several of the children were so shy and ill at ease last year that they spoke hardly a word at school. Most of them spoke the pidgin dialect.

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[4] Sensei is the title by which a teacher is called in the Japanese Language schools.

However, before the workshop they had stayed after school for five classes with the demonstration teacher, and during the previous year they were taught creative drama by outstanding teachers twice weekly, as part of a program supported by the Hawaii Curriculum Center.[5] During that year their language had noticeably improved in speech flow, in language usage, and in vocabulary extension.

Why did these children appear talented when they were really an average group from a disadvantaged area? A year earlier they unquestionably showed that they were linguistically deprived. The answer lies in creative drama, a most effectual vehicle for developing thinking and speaking. Teachers from other Honolulu schools have been amazed at what creative drama has done for the Kalihi-Uka children. One of them said after visiting a class, "I cannot believe Kalihi-Uka children can talk like that! How can it be possible? I refused to teach in that school last year because I was afraid to teach such nonverbal children."

The answer of one of the creative drama teachers is worth quoting and considering carefully. "You don't need to be afraid to teach Kalihi children or any other children, if you will learn to teach creative drama in the way we are doing it."

Creative Drama as Taught at Kalihi-Uka

Creative drama is a term applied to many and widely varying activities. The thinking and practices of the Kalihi-Uka teachers have been modeled on the work done by Winifred Ward[6] and Geraldine Siks.[7] Professor Siks defines creative drama, or creative dramatics as it is called in her book, as "an art for children . . . a group experience in which every child is guided to express himself as he works and plays with others for the joy of creating improvised drama. The children create characters, action, and dialogue as they are guided by a leader to think, feel, and become involved in the issue at hand."[8] In creative drama there are no scripts, no scenery, no stage properties, no costumes. The children work entirely with imaginative thinking, and the product is a joy to behold.

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[5] The Hawaii Curriculum Center operates on federal funds, Public Law 89-10.

[6] Winifred Ward, *Playmaking with Children*, 2nd Edition (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957).

[7] Geraldine Siks, *Creative Dramatics: An Art for Children* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958).

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The program in which the Kalihi-Uka teachers were trained began when I was searching for ways to work with speech problems in Hawaii schools. Finding creative drama to be more effective than other methods, I undertook postdoctoral study in this area.[9] Then in the summer of 1963 a new course designed for developing thought and speech through drama and creative movement appeared in the curriculum for training elementary teachers at the University of Hawaii. Later a graduate course was added and then a seminar.[10]

The Kalihi-Uka teachers gained skill in teaching creative drama as they worked in these courses and later in such special projects as giving demonstrations with children's classes, leading workshops for teachers, giving talks to professional groups, and carrying out small research projects. Throughout all these activities creative drama was proving amazingly effective in giving children, and sometimes adults, too, the vitality to think and the desire to express their thinking verbally.

Building skill in oral expression is the central concern of the Kalihi-Uka creative drama program. The oral language ability of the children grows specifically because the drama is taught as an art experience in which each child explores and learns to use his aesthetic sense or imagination. This program is, of course, not intended to produce acting skill, but rather to help children become more aware of life, see their physical surroundings with delight, develop empathy with other people, and find more faith and confidence in themselves. Increased language flow and growth in vocabulary are outcomes of this process in which the mind becomes free so that ideas run through it easily and flexibly, culminating in words, and the body becomes free to move, expressing ideas physically. The result is a fluid and ever changing art form combining verbal and physical expression, the drama.

Drama at Kalihi-Uka is taught as an art. Development of the aesthetic sense or the imagination is a continuing part of the process. Strengthening sense perception also is an important aspect. Early lessons in creative drama make the children aware of the world brought to them by their five senses. At times the children go out into the natural surroundings to discover material for creative drama sessions by observing trees, waving grasses, rainbows, misty rain, peaked mountains. At other times natural objects are brought into the classroom to stimulate imagination, sense memory, and movement. In later periods, poems or stories are used, each lesson following more or less the same plan: preclass activity, motivation, presentation of material, planning, acting out the plan, and evaluation.

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[9] Drama Department, University of Washington, 1960. Speech Department, Columbia University, September, 1962, to June, 1963.

[10] "Creative Expression in the Elementary School," "Curriculum Development in Creative Expression," and a seminar in the same work were the College of Education classes in which the Kalihi-Uka teachers had their training.

To be an artist implies that a person's attention is grasped by some phenomenon, that he becomes deeply involved in it, and that he expresses his feeling toward it into some form. "Art is feeling expressed into form," says Suzanne Langer. By this definition, the Kalihi-Uka children are artists, for they are extending their own feelings into the form of the drama. The art form is, of course, simple and fittingly childlike.

To prepare the children to become absorbed in the process, the classes begin with a warm-up or preclass activity which is not necessarily integrated with the subject matter of the lesson which follows. The warm-up prepares the children mentally, emotionally, and physically to concentrate. It allows them, in Ruth Sawyer's phrase, to "intend-the-mind" into the creative drama material and also into exploring ways to develop it into a play. A physical activity, a relaxation exercise, a game, and an intensive imaginative exercise are among the possibilities for effective preclass activities.

The lesson proper begins with a motivation period which leads the children directly into involvement with the material (story, poem, or idea). After listening to the story or poem, the children with the teacher evolve a plan for action. First one character is developed, played, and evaluated, followed by a second, and finally the two are put together in a scene. Dialogue is added when the children's wish to express, carefully nurtured by the teacher, is strong enough to carry them into speaking. Finally, the playing is evaluated. This sequence of planning, playing, and evaluating may be repeated several times during one class period or until the developmental needs of the children have been met.

In the story of Maui and the sun, mentioned above, listening was the preclass activity. From the record player came an ancient Hawaiian chant, accompanied by the ipu.[11] As the children seated themselves on a piece of authentic tapa,[12] they were asked to imagine life as it was in the prehistoric past, in the time of Maui. "What was happening when the people chanted? What would you see in the village if you were there?" This class was taught in midmorning when the children were fresh and rested. If it had been an afternoon hour when they were tired from sitting and working all day, a more active preclass activity, perhaps performing an imitative Hawaiian slap dance,[13] would have been more appropriate.

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[11] The ipu is a traditional Hawaiian percussion instrument made from a large gourd.

[12] Tapa is the paper-like cloth made by the ancient Hawaiians for clothing and floor coverings. It is not made for practical use today, although the process is sometimes demonstrated for interested persons.

In the motivation or mood development period, several objects which figured in the story were felt, smelled, touched, looked at, and discussed—the tapa upon which they were sitting, a bunch of baking bananas, and a branch from a wiliwili tree. Both in the preclass activity and in this part of the lesson the word "authentic" was used incidentally. In later lessons the children would hear the word again many times and be involved more directly in its use. This is typical of the kind of vocabulary development carried on in many creative drama classes. First the teacher uses the word several times, defining it by context, by gesture, or by movement. Then in discussion or during the questioning the children use it, also in context or with facial expression or gesture. Emotional reaction is of great importance in making the word a permanent acquisition.

After the children had recalled what they knew of Maui as a helper of man, they were asked to "listen to see how Maui helped man in this story." Maui's gift was the great one of slowing down the sun in summer; in other words, causing the seasons. The sun, of the two central characters the easier to play, was developed first, through a process of questioning and discussion. There were many opportunities for vocabulary expansion; for example, when describing how the sun will eat the bananas—by gobbling, by stuffing, by gulping, by devouring, by cramming the bananas in his mouth. His feelings as he ate were described too, greedy and gluttonous. When every child knew what the sun looked like, how he felt, and how and why he moved, half of the class as enormous suns demonstrated how they would awaken, reach with a long strong leg for the bananas, and gobble them greedily. After this playing period, the evaluation by the other children, who were watching Hawaiian villagers, stressed two points. "How did the suns show that they felt sly and greedy? What movements showed that they were enormous many-legged suns?"

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[13] Slap dance movements may be very simple and yet afford both a vigorous exercise and an enjoyment.

Contrasting the characterization of Maui with that of the sun offered many possibilities for critical thinking and vocabulary development also. Maui was brave, not cowardly, concerned for mankind, not greedy for himself, laughing and quick instead of slow and ponderous, and physically small as compared to the great sun. These ideas were brought out by the children who then played Maui, bravely climbing up Haleakala[14] to the wiliwili tree where he waited with his snares for the sun to reach over the edge of the crater. Finally, in the last scene, Maui lassoed the enormous blazing sun and bargained baked bananas for the sun's promise to move more slowly across the sky for half the year.

Throughout these periods of planning, then playing and finally evaluating, excitement, delight, and strong feeling propelled the children into verbal expression. Only when a child really wished to express his ideas and feelings was he asked to do so. Consequently, language flowed out, usually in the child's own natural speech, but often, too, incorporating words and idioms introduced by the teacher into this and earlier lessons. Language which evolves in this natural way, supported by the happiness children feel in creative drama classes, is language permanently acquired. No other method has been so effective with children in Hawaii.

Appraisal of Language Improvement through Creative Drama

Many school principals in Hawaii have been impressed with the language growth of children in creative drama classes, among them A. Ray Blue, principal at Kalihi-Uka, who said, "Probably for the first time the children make their minds work as *they* want them to work. Always before it's been doing what the teacher wants them to do." Mr. Blue quoted Ralph Kiyosaki, Hawaii State Superintendent of Schools, as saying, "Children must learn to think to make knowledge." "But," said Mr. Blue, "children must learn to think before they can make knowledge, and creative drama gives them this opportunity. First, the teachers are asking questions which cannot be answered by 'yes' and 'no,' but which demand thinking and expressing of the child. Secondly, the kind of English used is slowly improving. The level of the child's language is never mentioned, but I hear the teachers saying to children, 'Could you say that a little differently so the other children can understand it better?' "

Another consequence of the program, according to Mr. Blue, was that the faculty of his school had received very effective inservice training from the creative drama teachers, who travel from room to room.

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[14] Hale-a-ka-la means house-of-the-sun, pronounced hah-lay-ah-kah-lah, with the last syllable accented. It is located on the island of Maui, named for the hero, and is the mountain Maui is said to have climbed to snare the Sun God, La.

The following table shows the Kalihi-Uka program evaluated by teachers who observed the creative drama specialists in the different classrooms.

I. Language Development of Children

A. In Developing Better Oral Expression, Creative Drama

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Is especially helpful to the child who has very little language	10	2	
2. Provides excellent opportunities for spontaneous use of oral language	11	1	
3. Encourages more use of oral language (greater speech) flow	11	1	
4. Encourages more clear enunciation	8	4	
5. Develops better speech intonation	9	3	
6. Encourages use of complete and more complicated sentences	8	4	

B. In Developing New Oral Vocabulary, Creative Drama

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Shows children that working with words is fun	10	2	
2. Provides opportunities for children to learn and use more vivid and more descriptive words	10	2	
3. Helps children to be aware of how useful descriptive words are	9	3	

C. In Developing Better Listening Habits, Creative Drama

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Helps children listen more carefully to their peers	10	2	

	Very much	Some	Not at all
2. Helps children listen more attentively to the teacher	10	2	

D. In Developing Thinking, Creative Drama

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Helps children to think things through	9	3	
2. Helps children to think independently	10	2	
3. Arouses children to imagine	11	1	
4. Helps children to be more observant and critical in evaluating other children's thinking (expressed in words or movement)	11	1	
5. Encourages children to remember the sequential order of story events	9	3	
6. Encourages children to think and react without feeling inadequate or embarrassed	11	1	
7. Helps children to appreciate the ideas of others	10	2	

II. Personal Development of Children

A. Reactions of Shy Children

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Helps the reserved child to be a more active participant in a group situation	10	2	
2. Helps shy children to be less hesitant in participation	10	2	

B. Reactions of Aggressive Children

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Helps aggressive children release their feelings	10	2	
2. Helps the active child learn to be a more effective participant	10	2	

C. Eagerness of Children to Express

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Makes children eager to express themselves verbally	11	1	
2. Makes children eager to express themselves physically	10	2	
3. Allows children to be more verbal	11	1	
4. Allows children to be more expressive physically	12	0	
5. Gives the whole class a feeling of being able to communicate and act in wholesome ways with each other	9	3	
6. Provides opportunities for children to express themselves in their own ways with no right or wrong answers	12	0	
7. Gives children opportunities to express their inner thoughts	10	2	

D. Development of a Stronger Self-concept

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Helps children experience better social relationships in the classroom	6	6	
2. Allows children to be free to feel emotion	12	0	
3. Allows children to be free to experience	10	2	
4. Provides opportunity for children to enjoy life more and to be more enthusiastic	8	4	
5. Helps children develop more self-confidence	11	1	
6. Frees children's inhibitions	11	1	
7. Gives children more poise	10	2	
8. Helps children develop better self control, e.g. waiting for a turn to speak	9	3	

	Very much	Some	Not at all
9. Provides opportunity for children to release emotional tension	10	2	

III. Estimation of Program by Observing Teacher

A. Help to the Teacher-Observer

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. Gives the teacher an opportunity to observe children and to understand them better	11	1	
2. Provides the teacher with helpful background information of good literature (poems and stories)	8	4	
3. Helps the teacher learn and become aware of different techniques to create interest in working with children	12	0	
4. Shows the teacher ideas to use for effective classroom control	8	4	
5. Helps the teacher learn to ask questions which demand thinking and expressing of child	7	5	

B. Program for Next Year

	Very much	Some	Not at all
1. I hope this program continues next year	12	0	

Creative Drama as an Integral Part of the Language Arts

Music has been in American schools since their beginnings, and art has become an important part of the curriculum as its value for children has gained more and more understanding through the past few decades. Speech specialists are today a familiar part of the language arts program in many schools.

Creative drama belongs equally to the fine arts with music and art and to the skills of language development with other speech techniques.

Far from conflicting, the aesthetic aspect of teaching drama to children is the very quality which causes speech change. Sense perception, imagination, creative thinking, concentration, and physical movement produce and support a natural speech growth which is surrounded by good humor, happiness, and increasing belief in the self.

Kalihi-Uka is not alone among Hawaiian schools in demonstrating the worth of creative drama in speech improvement. Pope School in Waimanalo has for several years had a program showing similar results in language change. A two-year experiment at St. Theresa's School in the Palama district of Honolulu showed that first and second grade children could read better when they were taught creative drama by the language developing method described in this paper. On the island of Molokai in a short but decisively effective project, it was again shown that when children are taught creative drama they can learn to think and speak more effectively in a relatively short period. Pauoa, Puuhale, Palisades, Kuhio, University, Kahala, Maile, Kahuluu are but a few of the Oahu schools where principals and teachers have seen creative drama stimulating more creative thinking, more analytic thinking, more flowing expression of thought, and more delight and happiness in the lives of young children.

The growing conviction that drama is a necessary part of the language arts program is no longer an isolated view in this country. Following the Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English in 1966, three voices have been calling attention to the value of drama in the language arts. Douglas Barnes sees drama as a part of the classroom talk which is invaluable in allowing children to develop their responses to literature.[15] John Dixon shares his view and notes that "the neglect of talk and drama has had disastrous effects on writing."[16] The thesis of James Moffett's recent book "rests on the assumption that dramatic interaction—doing things verbally in situations with other people—is the primary vehicle for developing thought and language."[17] This states succinctly the assumption upon which the creative drama work in Hawaii rests. The need to develop better thinking and better speaking prompted the original work in this area. That the assumption has been found valid is demonstrated in the creative drama programs in Hawaii.

The views of Barnes, Dixon, and Moffett are applicable to any age level. In Hawaii we worked almost entirely with elementary school children. While creative drama cannot be considered a panacea for all language ills, the time has come when it would be wise to consider what drama can mean to the English program from kindergarten through the high school.

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[15] Douglas Barnes, *Drama in the English Classroom* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968).

[16] John Dixon, *Growth through English* (Reading, Eng.: National Association for the Teaching of English, 1967). Available through NCTE.

[17] James Moffett, *Drama: What Is Happening* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1967).

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ROLE PLAYING FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Role playing offers an excellent means to provide a guided, structured oral experience for the junior high English student, focusing as it does on whether a particular piece of language is adequate and appropriate. Playing out a role extemporaneously requires the student to develop a viewpoint, consider his audience, determine a purpose, and then to develop a set of language which reflects these variables. It involves important rhetorical considerations in a realistic situation where oral language can be scrutinized and objectively evaluated.

Initially a situation must be selected which has obvious dramatic possibilities. One particularly good source is the personal-social milieu of adolescence with its problems involving manners and values, interpersonal relationships, vocational and social choice, educational tasks, and moral judgments. A second excellent source of dramatic situations is the literature being read by the students, with its conflict, its suspense, and its demonstration of human possibilities and shortcomings. Role playing from literature gives the student an additional way to respond to the literary experience, requiring him to identify with characters and to evaluate the author's success.

Given a dramatic situation, the major outlines of which are apparent to a class, next the roles must be assigned to students. Whether the student volunteers or is assigned to a role because of his needs or ability, it is important to encourage him to project into the role, so he can play through the situation without script or prompting. The playing out of the situation will demand the full attention of the class. Discussion and criticism are best withheld during the playing; once the drama is done, then a thorough discussion is essential. Questions must probe at whether the characters behaved as they should have, whether their language was appropriate to their role and situation, whether the portrayals were honest and authentic. The fact that the players for the moment have been someone else makes it easier for everyone to be objective about the language used. The criticism is profitably followed by a replaying in whole or in part, with new players or the original ones.

The following description demonstrates role playing a situation from a reading selection:

Set the situation	Read Thurber's "Snapshot of a Dog"; stop at the point where Rex fights the other dog on the car tracks. Set the situation where the two brothers bring their bedraggled, determined hound home to explain why they were so late.
Assign the roles	Select students to portray each brother, the mother, and the father. Develop in broad outlines how each role is to appear and what purposes each character has. The detailed interpretation should be the role player's.
Play the scene	Have the players work through the situation of arriving home late with the wet, mangled dog, developing their role as they see it.
Discuss the playing	Examine the interpretation of each role; discuss the language used; discover incongruities in characterization and language; elicit suggestions; compare other interpretations.
Replay the scene	Reinterpret the scene in light of the discussion, using the same players or new ones. These last two phases could be repeated if it appeared profitable.

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ON THE TEACHING OF AMERICAN ENGLISH

"American English Invades Britain" was a headline in the *Newark Sunday News,* April, 1965. The article stated that the British are still speaking the Queen's English, but that because of American verbal invasions, future generations of Britons will be speaking "the President's English." The Queen's English constantly is bombarded with such Americanisms as "baby sitter," "know-how," "gimmick"; and Britons are using "fix" for "mend," "mad" for "angry," "radio" for "wireless," "mail" for "post," "date" for "engagement," and "reservation" for "advance booking."

"Wondafuru, wondafuru," shouts a teenager as she listens to the "disuku jokii" playing her favorite "rikuesuto."[1] The Japanese language is obviously being invaded by Americanisms. Via radio, television, records, and motion pictures, thousands of Americanisms are being adopted into Japanese. Note the following Japanese words and their American equivalents:

pa-ma	permanent
gu-ri-ru	grill
su-te-re-o	stereo
cha-ko-re-to	chocolate
hoomurun	home run
fu-ri-ru	frill
banura aisu kurimu	vanilla ice cream
jyukubaaksu	juke-box
souppu	soup
remon	lemon
sarad	salad

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[1] "Wondafuru Words Are Slipping into the Japanese," *New York Times,* March 2, 1965.

Even the Austrians like our language, said Professor James Pettegrove of Montclair State College in an article in the *Newark Sunday News*, November 8, 1964. He noted that such words as "playboy," "teenager," "gangster," "jet," and "paperback" are scattered throughout the text of German newspapers published in Vienna. He stated: "The German translations of some words, many carried in America, are cumbersome and seldom have quite the same connotation. The average German newspaper reader takes the English terms for granted, almost as a part of his own language."

How would you order a frankfurter in Mexico City? Ask for "un hot dog" and you'll get it. Do you want a box spring? Just ask for "un box spring."[2] The Spanish-English potpourri is generally called Spanglish. Carmen Ibanez de Rivas, professor of Spanish at the University of the Americas, notes that some English words, especially the most modern ones, lack adequate Spanish equivalents. Examples: "switch, socket, and paint thinner." In Spanish they come out phonetically as "swee-chi, so-ket, and tinner."

And, finally, the French have added American English words. In fact, the French were so upset by the invasion of English words that an anti-English campaign was started by *Le Figaro*, a leading morning newspaper, and General De Gaulle chided French scientists for speaking "Frenglish." Prominent in Frenglish are such sporting terms as "match," "football," "goal," "shoot," and "score."

If a student is made to realize that American English is dynamic, forceful, picturesque, worldwide, and colorful, I feel that he will take pride in learning his language well and in using it correctly at all times.

How can you teach American English? How can you make the course alive, practical, and meaningful?

First, you may present to the student a brief history of the English language, as presented in Mario Pei's *The Story of English.* (6) Students will be fascinated by such chapters as "The Tongue of the Anglo-Saxons," "The Coming of the Normans," "The Chaucerian Era," "The Age of Elizabeth," and "The Dawn of Present-Day English." You may find that phonograph records are most helpful in the presentation of this subject. Highly recommended are "A Thousand Years of English Pronunciation" (Caedmon) and "Selections from *Beowulf*, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Gettysburg Address" (National Council of Teachers of English).

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[2] *Honolulu Star-Bulletin,* November 20, 1967.

When students listen to the latter record, they may read a transcription of Chaucer and *Beowulf*.

Second, to understand the richness and the levels of usage of American English, students should become thoroughly familiar with *Webster's Third International Dictionary*. To do so in a two-week period, you may assign readings in James Sledd and Wilma R. Ebbitt's *Dictionaries and THAT Dictionary: A Casebook on the Aims of Lexicographers and the Targets of Reviewers.* (10) In this way students are exposed to the philosophy of lexicography and to the linguistic school which states that (1) language changes constantly; (2) change is normal; (3) spoken language is the language; (4) correctness rests upon usage; and (5) all change is relative. (1)

Because the Sledd casebook presents controversial articles concerning the role of the dictionary, the introduction of new words, and the labels used for words, students learn how dynamic American English is. For example, Wilson Follett states in his article "Sabotage in Springfield":

> Within a few days of publication the new dictionary was inevitably notorious for its unreserved acceptance as standard of *wise up, get hep, . . . ants in one's pants, . . . hepped up. . . .* (p. 113)

On the other hand, Gordon J. Gallan, president of G. & C. Merriam Company, stated:

> The recent explosion of language has forced into everyday usage an avalanche of bewildering new verbal concepts, ranging from A-bomb, astronaut, beatnik, den mother, and fringe benefit to satellite, solar house, wage dividend and Zen. (p. 53)

You may suggest that students prepare a list of words, outlandish or otherwise, which they will want to look up in the *Third*. In a class hour you may select a student to read the definitions of the words selected by the class. It is a revelation! The class will find that the *Third* is more accurate, up-to-date, and descriptive than Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English.* (5)

All students should become familiar with Marckwardt's text *American English,* which describes the lushness of our language because of its historical and geographical background. (4) The original colonists, Marckwardt states, came to Virginia in 1607 and spoke Elizabethan English, but the British English changed its vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar because of such writers as Bunyan, Swift, Addison, and Pope. In fact, to this day in the areas of the Smokies and the Ozarks, a variety of Elizabethan English is still spoken. American English was further enhanced because of the infusion of words from Amerindian culture. Settlers had no words for the flora and fauna, foods, and toponymies which they found in this new homeland. They used such Indian words as "pecan," "squash," "skunk," "caucus," "succotash," "squaw," and "wigwam." When the French explorers, trappers, and missionaries streamed from the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, they too found a new and different environment, and in time American English acquired such words as "cent," "praline," "voyageur," "dime," "levee," "prairie," "depot," "bayou," and "picayune." The Spanish settled in areas around the Gulf of Mexico and westward toward the Rockies and to the Pacific. Words still common in American English which may be traced to the Spanish of the nineteenth century, classified according to aspects of life and fields of activity which they represent, are "burro," "cafeteria," "sombrero," "hoosegow," "ranch," "rodeo," "corral," and "mulatto." The Dutch, who settled around New York, gave us such words as "cole slaw," "cookie," "cruller," "sleigh," "boss," "patroon," "Yankee," "spook," "dope," and "Santa Claus." The German element in American English stemmed from an immigrant people during the second half of the 1800's. Words concerning food and drink include "bock beer," "frankfurter," "liverwurst," "noodle," "pretzel," "sauerkraut," "zwiebach," and the Germans also gave us words like "semester," "nix," "phooey," "hex," "bum," and "ouch."

Our frontiermen, using exaggeration in their words and tending toward wild hyperbole and fantastic simile, tried to impress the listeners with the superiority of the speaker. Marckwardt states:

> . . . The frontiersman, ring-tailed roarer, half horse and half alligator, described himself as *kan-karriferous* and *rambunctious,* his lady love as *angeliferous* and *splendiferous.* With consummate ease he could *teetotaciously exfluncticate* his opponent in a *conbobberation,* that is to say a conflict or disturbance, or *ramsquaddle* him *bodaciously,* after which the luckless fellow would *absquatulate. . . .*When deceived he was *hornswoggled,* when bewildered, *obfusticated. . . .* (p. 100)

In our early national life, life was hard and dull. There were few comforts. For example, the word *salon* was borrowed from French, a drawing room. Not long after its adoption, it was applied to drawing rooms, large, elegant, and public. Americans looked for a new word which could be applied to a drinking establishment which was not a hotel and selected the word "saloon." It would seem that "opera house," as a term for the small-town American theater, represents precisely the same tendencies, cultural and semantic, that were behind the adoption of "saloon" for drinking establishment. Americans are famous for "the glorification of the commonplace by the use of euphemisms; for example, "casket" for "coffin," "janitor" to "custodian" to "director," "undertaker" to "mortician," "toilet" to "rest room," "comfort station" to "powder room," "undergarments" to "unmentionables" to "subtrousers" to "inexpressibles."

Because of the Puritan prohibition of profanity, American English has developed a whole lexicon of near-swearing, including *darn, drat, doggone, blasted, Sam Hill, gee whittaker, gee whiz,* most bearing a phonetic resemblance to the words for which they have been substituted.

A fascinating segment of American English is the study of American dialects. Two excellent readings to introduce students to this unit are "The Cultural Matrix of American English" and "American Social Dialects" by Raven McDavid. (3) For a more complete study, students can turn to Shuy's *Discovering American Dialects* (9) or Carroll E. Reed's *Dialects of American English.* (8) Students will be able to discuss the forces underlying dialect distribution, the main dialects, the influence of foreign language, and dialects in literature. An excellent writing assignment for the students is to have them analyze the dialects of the individual members of their family, according to the vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar which they use. To insure a true analysis of the entire family, instructors should assign this paper about a month in advance and suggest that students use tape recorders, if available.

Additional suggestions to enhance the teaching of American English are as follows:

> To study the social function of the language as it pertains to religion, family, economic relations, politics, superstition, literature, science, and education—Pei's *The Story of Language* (7)
>
> To study slang, jargon, and argot—Kottler and Light's *The World of Words* (2)
>
> To study linguistics, as an introduction Graham Wilson's *A Linguistics Reader* (11), which has such topics as "Our National Mania for Correctness," "Meanings, Habits, and Rules," "Pejorative Terms for Midwest Farmers," "Snobs, Slobs, and the English Language."

A most meaningful approach to the study of American English is to discuss the daily newspaper and magazine articles pertaining to American English. In the past three years, I have clipped pertinent articles and read them to my classes. Students are readily able to see the importance and the popularity of American English; to realize a certain magic and mystery of words, especially by such articles as Bergan Evans' "Couth to Uncouth and Vice Versa," Brackman's "Graffiti in Print," Cousins' "Bungling the Language," and Allan's "Words Go to College"; to understand the philosophy of slang and slanguage, Bernstein's "Now It's Watch Your Slanguage," Wylie's "What Are They Saying?" and Guitar's "Not for Finks"; to become acquainted with the language of the G.I. and space, Treaster's "G-Eye View of Vietnam" and Bromage's "Vernacular of Space"; and to learn the neologisms in the news, such words as "snail-napping," "read-in," "lie-in," "live-in," "sit-in," "medichair," "lulu," "ice," "squadrol," and "mill-in."

Instructors of English will have a real challenge to offer their students a study in depth of American English and to instill in their students a pride in their language. In fact, if this attitude can be inculcated into our American students, it may help them to speak, write, and read more intelligently and effectively.

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II. LITERATURE

LITERATURE

This grouping consists of ten articles devoted to organizational plans and teaching techniques for improving the understanding and appreciation of literature. Plans described cover all age levels and a number of literary genre. Motivational devices are emphasized.

"A Departure from Tradition in a Senior High English Class" and "Interdisciplinary Literature" provide a new look in organizational patterns. The former describes a plan for independent study in eleventh grade American literature classes; of particular interest is the list of culminating projects. The latter gives an account of a plan whereby English teachers and social studies teachers work together to promote a better and more meaningful reading program, with details of the objectives and procedures included.

Two articles describe ways to promote an interest in poetry. "Reading Poetry Aloud" concentrates on Carl Sandburg's "To the Ghost of John Milton." "Introducing Poetry through Pop Music" tells about how Simon and Garfunkle and the Mamas and the Papas may be used to stimulate an interest in reading poetry.

Drama is the subject of two articles. "A Day at the Theatre–With a Difference" describes a New Orleans experiment aimed at making great drama meaningful to 40,000 students of varying backgrounds and abilities. "A Thematic Approach to Drama" outlines a procedure for organizing and studying contemporary drama as a means of interesting students.

"Not Only for the Very Young" is an account of an activity in a sixth grade class in New York City where students studied Caldecott Medal books as an incentive for discussion and further reading.

The remaining three articles are concerned with motivating devices. "The Numbers Game in Analyzing Fiction" presents a plan whereby students do their own rating of literary selections and at the same time learn a great many things about literary structure. "High Notes on Hardy" refers to some musical versions of scenes from Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge.* "Organizing a Class Library" relates the experience of a high school teacher of English in organizing a library for her own classroom and thereby greatly increasing the interest of her students in reading.

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A DEPARTURE FROM TRADITION IN A SENIOR HIGH ENGLISH CLASS

To make best use of our limited teaching time, we must—during most of the school year—teach our classes *as classes.* We ask our students *as a class* "to discuss the central symbols of this poem in a paper of 150 to 200 words." Or we ask the *class* "to be sure to master those subordinate conjunctions on page 43 by tomorrow."

There are times, however, when we should encourage each student to explore independently some aspect of English that interests him as an individual. With the teacher acting as advisor only, the student for a time should be allowed to set his own goals for an independent study project. He should be allowed to make his own assignments during the unit. He should be allowed to plan his own study time in and out of class. He should be allowed to set his own standards for the evaluation of his work. Indeed, he should be allowed to discover how specialists in a discipline like English carry forward their own learning.

During the past several years with my eleventh grade American literature classes, I've conducted independent study projects that I think have been quite successful. Begun as an experiment, the endeavor has since evolved into an annual two- or three-week unit. (The time allocation depends upon the abilities of the particular class.) I've discovered that my students find it enjoyable, challenging, and rewarding when they are allowed to work and study independently on worthwhile projects that truly interest them.

Although I begin my own planning for the unit in the fall, I schedule it for the second semester for these reasons:

—By then, the student has adjusted himself to the course (and the course to him);

—he has generally developed a special interest in at least one facet of the language arts;

—and the class as a whole has "matured" to the point where it is ready, willing, capable, and *responsible* enough to depart from the traditional approach to the study of English.

Several weeks before the unit begins I set aside class time for a discussion of the objectives of independent study in general and of the guidelines that will apply to our projects in particular. My students learn that they will have a block of time available to them to study independently a topic of their own choosing. The topic must relate to reading, writing, speaking, or listening. And it cannot be just any delightful frivolity that comes to mind. The students know they will be expected *to work* even though they'll be on their own. Despite this restriction, however, no student has yet been kept from investigating a topic of personal interest.

During the few weeks before the unit begins, each student plans his project in detail and assembles or sends for materials he needs. Some students needs special guidance from the teacher. They may need help, for example, in defining a topic and relating it to one of the language arts, in finding reference materials, and in estimating the time required to complete their project. A helpful guide for such boys and girls is the list I make available to them of the best sixty or so independent study projects completed by former students. The list serves both as an idea starter for related topics and as a guide to how projects should be limited for scholarly treatment.

Because of this early planning, each student is ready to give me a copy of his project plan on the day the unit begins. This blueprint declares the objectives of the study, shows the materials or sources to be used, lists the student's own day-by-day assignments, and carries the form of evaluation which the student and I will use to appraise both work in progress and the completed project.

As the unit gets under way, each student is expected to put two hours of work daily into his project: an hour in class, an hour after class. Since I have a copy of everyone's plans, I'm able to check progress during the class sessions which now run as independent study laboratories.

I also try to help those who are having trouble with their project. Quite often a student discovers once he's started work that he must redefine his purpose, narrow the scope of his study, or change his day-by-day assignments. More often than not, the student has set for himself too ambitious an undertaking for the available time.

When students find they must make revisions, they are responsible for keeping their project plan and my copy of it up to date. Hopefully, these modifications are initiated by the students themselves, for they learn more by discovering their own errors of strategy or method than by my telling them what's wrong.

A year ago all 132 students in my five classes submitted papers based on their projects. But they did much more than write papers. Many read widely and deeply in the fields of fiction, poetry, criticism, and literary scholarship. Many gave speeches. Others presented original dramatizations. Still others took excerpts from novels, revised them into script form, and memorized them for presentation to the class. Four students gave shows of original art in connection with their projects; two gave recitals of musical scores they had composed on literary themes.

Although these presentations culminate the independent study unit, they are actually delivered during a subordinate, oral English unit that rides like a caboose after the major unit. At this time I review the basic principles of speaking that were covered earlier in the year. *Then* the students make their presentation.

The richness and diversity of independent investigation is reflected by the sampling in the list below of the projects of last year's junior class. The list also suggests that the student—given a freedom blended with direction—can set higher goals for himself than the instructor would set for a typical three-week period.

When I first started the unit as an experiment, my purposes were to help students learn more about studying on their own, to add the spark of the student's own motivation, to show how English subject matter can serve as a focus for the school curriculum, and to unify the separate language arts. I feel more than ever today that independent study serves all these purposes. Furthermore, students also learn by working on their own that such qualities as good organization, initiative, practicality, and resourcefulness are essential to all creative endeavors.

And I, as the teacher, learn too. I serve, of course, as a resource person during the unit. But I also become a learner in my own classroom.

What the High School Student-turned-scholar Can Do

—Observations on Russian Life and Thought as Revealed Through *War and Peace, Crime and Punishment,* and *Dr. Zhivago.*

—Eight Oil Portraits of Selected Characters from *Franny and Zooey, The Moon Is Down,* and *Black Like Me.*

—Major Musical Themes and Background Music as Composed for *Rebecca.*

—The Similarity of Obstacles Overcome by Men in Medicine in *Arrowsmith, Of Human Bondage,* and *The Citadel.*

—A Study of the Romantic Style of Writing as Represented Through Selected Works from French and American Literature.

—The Plea of the Common Man in America as Told by John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath, Cannery Row,* and *Of Mice and Men.*

—A Walk into Night. (a student's short story)

—After reading and studying *The Glass Menagerie,* a student wrote an original musical background for a ballet that represented Laura. She designed her own costume and gave the ballet before an audience.

—A Unit on the Indian–Designed for Fourth Graders.

—An Analysis of Parallels among *Giant, So Big,* and *Cimarron.*

—A Comparison of the Maturation Processes of Boys and Girls as Seen Through a Study of *Studs Lonigan* and *Marjorie Morningstar.*

—My Concept of the Ideal Home. (The student drew the prints, constructed a miniature scale model, and wrote an explanatory paper on his concept of an ideal home.)

—Seeing America from a Motion Picture Screen. (The student took moving pictures of various sections of the country–he began his project the previous summer–and edited and spliced his film. He wrote his own script and worked in a musical background for the tape recorder.)

—Stage Settings of Selected Scenes for Dickens' *Oliver Twist.*

—Concepts of Hell and Sin as Exemplified in *Lord of the Flies* and *The Scarlet Letter.*

—A Comparison of Themes from Selected Works of Ernest Hemingway: *For Whom the Bell Tolls, The Sun Also Rises,* and *The Old Man and the Sea.*

—Possible Effects of Socialism as Seen Through Ayn Rand's *We the Living.*

—A Study of Frost's, Parker's, Riley's, and Cummings' Styles of Poetic Expression; Original Musical Compositions Representing Various Moods Projected by Selected Poems.

—Lincoln and Kennedy: Parallels and Contrasts. (Books: *The Day Lincoln Was Shot, John Kennedy,* and *The Web of Conspiracy*)

—Themes of Hope from *Maggie-Now, Tomorrow Will Be Better,* and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.*

—Identity: Eugene? Thomas? ______? (Sources: Elizabeth Newell's *Thomas Wolfe* and Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*)

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INTERDISCIPLINARY LITERATURE

In a traditional program of study, book reports generally hold a position of central importance. In spite of this position, teachers' objectives in assigning book reports remain nebulous; they range from the idealistic goal of cultivating students' personal addiction to reading to the expedient goal of providing another yardstick for teachers' grading. Though many teachers of English agree that book reports pose problems, some continue to assign rigid report forms; others oppose the assignment of any written book report.

Students view book reports with mixed emotions also. One cause of their dismay is the repetition of content among books assigned in English and social studies. It seems reasonable, therefore, to correlate book reports between social studies and English classes. While eliminating the extra burden of multiple reports for both teacher and student, correlation helps to establish students' awareness of the inherent relationship between the two subjects.

Under the direction of the language arts coordinator and the social studies coordinator, a committee of English and social studies teachers representing our two senior high schools and six junior high schools has been meeting regularly since the beginning of the school year. The committee soon established two goals. First, the committee sought a plan whereby a sound move toward an integrated approach to English and social studies could be introduced into a thoroughly traditional system such as ours. At all times the committee remained aware of the composition of our faculty, the textbook-oriented curriculum guides now in use, and the limitations of a six-period schedule.

Second, the committee concluded that a reasonable and educationally sound program should be designed in which meaningful written and oral assignments would satisfy requirements for both English and social studies. Several English faculty members denounced the irregular and sometimes irresponsible assignment of the same novel to a whole class. Because of the plenitude of paperbacks, it had become too easy to repeat novels on another grade level with little anticipation of outcomes. On the other hand, social studies teachers deplored the arbitrary selection of books by their students for book report requirements, a factor reinforcing their observation that students lack experience in correlating English and social studies.

From these observations the committee recommended designing a program that calls for the study of genre or literary form at each grade level through the close study of a major work, the content of which is related to the general emphasis of the social studies at that grade level. In no way should the plan prevent the English teacher from exploring literature apart from social emphasis or literary forms other than that included in the sequence, nor would it inhibit the study of historical documents for their own value in the social studies class. Yet, the plan could link the two disciplines and reinforce the connection on each succeeding grade level, thus assuring a student's exposure to the subtle interplay of English and social studies.

Plans to provide an integrated approach to both subject areas incensed those teachers who ceremoniously snap shut their classroom doors for fifty minutes each period and teach English or social studies. Encouraging a teacher from another discipline to snap open the inviolable door was to invite trauma. Suspicion and distrust were widespread, for a time. The notion of team teaching meant to many teachers the massing of students for lectures or films with two or three teachers "keeping the peace."

The committee's proposal, however, would put two, perhaps three, teachers into a class of conventional size; those teachers would then teach as a team. As a pilot project, two junior high teachers and two senior high teachers, one teacher from each discipline in each case, accepted the challenge.

The two junior high teachers selected *These Were the Sioux* by Mari Sandoz. They based their selection on the following premises: (1) the subject of Indians still holds a romantic fascination for seventh graders; (2) the Sioux were important in Iowa history, a fact emphasized in the seventh grade social studies curriculum; (3) there is considerable regional interest since Sandoz was a native of Nebraska and her observations are from the homesteading era in northwestern Nebraska; (4) the book is short and, hence, would not frighten the slow reader with its bulk; (5) the book is written in simple narrative style, is easily understood, and yet possesses definite literary merit. (Note in the Sample Plan the committee's decision to study the form of the journal, diary, and autobiography at the seventh grade level.)

Specific class activities in English involved the following:

Library Research on the Author—This experience taught the use of many reference sources.

Vocabulary Study—Words were drawn from context rather than the dictionary for the study of word meaning.

Study of Style—The simple and direct style of the author led some students to investigate why the author wrote as she did and the relation of style to purpose.

Word Study—A comparison of this book with *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford, which pupils had read previously, led to the observation that the selection of adverbs and adjectives is related to an author's style and purpose of writing.

Written Composition—Students were asked to use either the form of a diary or journalistic reporting to compare the viewpoints of Indians and settlers on ideas in the book.

Specific class activities in social studies involved the following:

Geography—Map study was necessary, and the class noted the influence of geographic environment upon the character, outlook, and occupation of the Sioux.

Anthropology and Sociology—Through comparisons and contrasts of the mores and folklore of the Sioux with other cultures, the class was able to infer why the Indian thought and acted as he did.

Economics—Land use and particularly the Indian's concept of land in contrast with that of the white man was seen as a main source of conflict.

History—The students studied the events not only as traditional American history records them but also as the Indian recorded his own history.

The two senior high school teachers used the same approach to present *Darkness at Noon* by Arthur Koestler. Two factors supported the selection: (1) a course in Russian history is offered to twelfth graders but lacks appropriate supplementary reading; and (2) the English curriculum does not provide for the study of world literature.

Through guided discussions and lectures, the students probed the recurring relationship between means and ends. This theme, as well as the writer's art, makes the novel a work of art as well as a documentation of history. The English instructor explored the literary devices of the historical novel and the development of theme while the history instructor exposed the concepts of hero worship and the Russian revolutionary tradition. Too, since the novel has been made into a play, the drama teacher brought forth both common elements and points of departure between the novelist and the playwright.

The oral and written assignments, the second goal of the committee, needed joint preparation. At this point notions of a traditional book report form fell by the wayside. The teachers planned written and oral lessons which plunged the students into the substance of the works. They probed such topics as identification with a fictional character in a time of revolution, perception and judgment of the hero, and the extent to which the history of the time influences the writing of the time. They arranged for role playing of significant passages.

These correlated assignments focused on the student's ideas, his responses to the work. Through these assignments, students studied the work itself, not what has been written about it. In addition, the cooperative planning assured continual evaluation and reorganization according to the goals agreed to by *all* the participating teachers.

Having established the practicability of correlated teaching of a work and having shown the flexibility of correlated assignments, the committee designed a sequential program for grades 7-12. The immediate tasks were suggesting the literary forms to be studied at given grade levels and establishing a list of works correlated with the social studies emphasis at that same level. Teachers from the schools involved were asked to submit titles of works which they considered appropriate to the sketchy plan developed by the committee. After several revisions, the committee drew up a bibliography to accompany several alternative guides for each grade level. Flexibility in the selection of the core text for each class helped overcome the objection to the program on the grounds, "My students can't read that!" Thus, various works relating to the social studies emphasis at a particular grade level are available within the sequence of literary form.

The following is a sample of one alternative plan for the sequence:

Sample 7th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: Canada Iowa Latin America	Emphasis on: form and content of the biography and autobiography, journal and diary

Selections: *These Were the Sioux* or *Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence*

Sample 8th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: American history through the Civil War period; early expansion of the West	Emphasis on: introduction to the techniques of the historical novel

Selections: *Johnny Tremain* or *Children of the Covered Wagon* (slower readers)

Another plan includes the teaching of the folk tale as a part of the American tradition.

Sample 9th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: life as a citizen in America	Emphasis on: techniques of essay writing

Selections: *Profiles in Courage* or *Profiles of a President* (slower readers)

Sample 10th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: World history with added attention to Southeast Asia and the Far East	Emphasis on: development of the hero concept in literature

Selections: *Odyssey* or *The Good Earth*

Sample 11th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: American history after the Civil War	Emphasis on: techniques of modern drama

Selections: *Inherit the Wind* or *The Glass Menagerie*

Sample 12th Grade Plan

Social Studies	*English*
Emphasis on: Economics and American problems	Emphasis on: techniques and uses of satire

Selections: *The Great Gatsby* or *Babbitt*

We have only started; there are still many problems to be overcome. Currently the students are purchasing those paperbacks which they want to keep, while the school is providing some for student use during the units. Conflicts in class schedules must be resolved as well as conflicts arising from a traditional program using an anthology text as a basis for literature study. For example, our existing curriculum guide calls for English literature at the twelfth grade; in our proposal, American satire will be studied. Nonetheless, these problems are not curbing the progress of the program; as it arises, each problem is dealt with and resolved through committee action.

Professional journals carry articles about ways to excite, encourage, and motivate students. Our work, however, has not been student-centered but teacher-centered. And two excited and enthusiastic teachers have successfully motivated our students.

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READING POETRY ALOUD

René Wellek makes a useful distinction between what he calls a performance (a recital) of a poem and the pattern of sound that is actually in the poem (irrespective of the personal idiosyncrasies of the reciter).[1] Certainly, a poem should not be the victim of "affective fallacies" any more than it should be the victim of "intentional fallacies." But the separation between performance and pattern of sound that Wellek implies need not be as wide and distinct as he implies. Why? Because the pattern of sound one hears as one performs the poem could be the pattern of sound that is in the poem. Now it is true that:

> The reader has no more right to revise the rhythms (of the poem) in the interest of what he considers an effective presentation than he has a right to revise any other aspects of the language.[2]

And it is true that the reader should hear the "autonomous movement"[3] that is in the poem. And it is true that a poem *is* an emotive and cognitive experience and is divisible only by analysis and that, therefore, a reader's analysis of a poem, no matter how consciously he tries to avoid making the poem a victim, is bound to be influenced by the impact or impression the poem makes upon him. In short, it is true that a poem is a "felt thought" in two ways: in creation and reception. But it is also true that one's knowledge of these pitfalls that would make a poem a victim must not deter one from performing a poem, that is, reading poetry aloud, for " . . . only such a reading will render the rhythm with precision"[4] and " . . . the mind's ear can be trained only by way of . . . the reading of poetry aloud."[5] And certainly at least the "mind's ear" must operate effectively if the reader is finally to analyze and describe and judge the metrics of a poem.

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[1] "Euphony, Rhythm and Metre," in *The Structure of Verse,* ed. Harvey Gross (New York: Fawcett World Library, Premier M304, 1966), p. 22—hereafter cited as *Verse.*

[2] Yvor Winters, "The Audible Reading of Poetry," in *Verse,* p. 136.

[3] *Ibid.*

Now of all things about prosody that are neither clear nor generally agreed upon, there is one thing that is clear and that does generate agreement. Simply, the poem's rhythmic structure is the chief element of its emotive impact. And if, basically, meter is the norm and rhythm is the carefully manipulated exception or departure from the norm, then certainly the reader must pay careful attention to the principles of meter and rhythm. It is at this precise point that the scholarly argument begins. To speak in terms of principles, one must have a theory of prosody, but which theory works: graphic, musical, or acoustic? Frankly, no one of them.

Graphic metrics is alien to the English language it is supposed to serve. First, it tends to be dogmatic, and it is not rare to note the graphic prosodist twisting and bending a line of verse to fit an iambic norm. Second, it is based on a system of fixed quantitative measures, but typical English verse is based on a system of periodic stresses of varying degrees. Musical and acoustic metrics are highly relative and subjective. Furthermore, musical prosody is exclusive since it denies that "free verse" is verse,[6] and acoustic prosody is exclusive since it is concerned only with sound (performance). I do not submit that this prosodic debate is factious and beside the point. I do submit, however, that it is a special problem and leans toward *a priori* prejudices. I think that poetry should be read inductively and that the actual discussion of metrics should grow out of the inductive readings, that is, the attempts to analyze and describe and judge the poem as an emotive and cognitive experience. For this reason, I am impressed by the experience Seymour Chatman reports in "Robert Frost's 'Mowing': An Inquiry into Prosodic Structure."[7] It is conceivable to me that Chatman is occasionally put down because his conclusions are dependent upon the performance of eight reciters (one of whom is Frost himself). In fact, Samuel R. Levin has suggested that "oral performance" forces the reciter to make choices about a poem that finally nullify the syntactic ambiguity which, he claims, is essential to the nature of poetry.[8] But I see in Chatman's approach a method that may be used (I think successfully) in the college freshman poetry section or class. (Though I really believe this method should be first employed in some form in the elementary grades.)

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Donald A. Stauffer, *The Nature of Poetry* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 203-206.

[7] In *Discussions of Poetry: Rhythm and Sound*, ed. George Hemphill (Boston: D. C. Heath & Company, 1961).

Why not assign a poem, say, Hopkins' "Spring and Fall to a Young Child," or, if this seems as if I'm stacking my case (since this poem is "musical" and therefore clearly performable), how about something in "free verse," Sandburg's "To the Ghost of John Milton" (from *Good Morning, America*)? This seems to be the kind of poem Stauffer has in mind when he claims that free verse is not poetry. But this, again, is an argument that should take place after (or later during) the reading of poems.

For "homework" ask the student simply to read Sandburg's poem aloud until he feels and thinks that he has come up with a reading that he can defend. This experience, generally speaking, should show the student that a poem is a fusion of sound and sense, for to be able to defend his oral reading implies that he can make some sense out of the poem. And if Harvey Gross is right, "The prosodist's job is empirical,"[9] then it is correct procedure for the student to hear the rhythmic structure as it operates in the poem, that is, without *a priori* prejudices of what's supposed to be happening. And if the teacher is really interested in teaching the student how to read poems (I confess, this should happen before a student is a college freshman), then it is again correct procedure for the student to learn how to execute, express, and trust his independent analysis and judgment.

In class, ask the student to read the poem as he hears it. Then decide the next step. For example, the student's oral reading may seem especially awkward or inappropriate. Maybe the student doesn't *hear* the contrast between the quiet, ordinary speech of the opening lines and (after the terse, pivotal "Sat with only memories and talk—") the more tense and strong speech of the closing lines. Maybe he doesn't *see* the switch from "if" (stanzas 1-2) to act (stanzas 3-4) or that the diction grows progressively more vigorous until aggregating adjectives set up the most vigorous speech line in the poem, "And God Himself and the rebels God threw into hell." Maybe he doesn't notice that the "rebellious" *vers libre* meter coalesces with the theme of rebellion. Or, maybe the student hears and sees and experiences something else. If the student and teacher do not agree, the teacher ought not to bemoan the stupidity of the students, or, more serious a sin, their lack of preparation. (I submit that the kind of classroom practice I am prescribing is a more constructive, though difficult and energy consuming, way to cope with disagreement.) The teacher ought to be able to demonstrate why his own reading is preferable, or why, specifically, the student's reading ignores or distorts the poem. If the teacher can't or won't do this, then what's wrong with the student's reading?

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[8] "Suprasegmentals and the Performance of Poetry," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XLVIII, 4 (December, 1962).

[9] "Prosody and Literary Study," in *Verse*, p. 8.

On the other hand, the student's reading may seem right. But the importance of this poetry exercise is not agreement, or not primarily agreement. Rather, the exercise aims to enable the student to discover for himself how important meter and rhythm are to a poem. Furthermore, the exercise requires that the student clearly defend his reading of the poem. When this reading includes both the pattern of sound and the pattern of sense, that is, the organic structure of the poem, then a valid analytical and judicial premise is learned.

Eventually, as this poetry exercise is performed repeatedly, it will be necessary to draw conclusions and learn terms. Defense of a reading requires not only expository and argumentative technique but also commonly known and agreed upon nomenclature. I suggest that the teacher postpone this discussion until it cannot be avoided. Permit the student to fumble his way through his own brand of demonstration. There is always the chance that he will not fumble, but if he does, what does it matter so long as the environment is human and real learning occurs? When the time comes for the teacher to expound upon metrical theory, I suggest that he do so, precisely.

The three main theories are inadequate, though each is useful. First, they must be defined in terms of their chief characteristics. Second, they must be examined in terms of their usefulness (their pluses and minuses) in dealing with a poem. Then there is the "new" material and method of linguistics—the significance of pitch, stress, and juncture—that can possibly "explain" rhythmic structure in a way that the three other metrical theories cannot. The teacher, especially the teacher of college freshmen, must keep in mind that it is not answers by which he teaches—though, for the most part, answers are what the awkward and timorous and anxious freshman wants—but questions. For the most part, answers tend to make the student a passive receptacle. Questions invite the student's will. And questions can lead to the kind of discovery and education that will make it impossible for the student not to read poetry in the life he will live after his college life.

It is perhaps fitting that an essay on classroom practice terminate with something that actually happened in the classroom. Moreover, the incident is relevant to my thesis. A student recently questioned me on the use of the exclamatory "O" in the ballad, "Edward." Since, whenever possible, I try to avoid direct answers, I decided to "answer" by stealing a page from *Understanding Poetry*.[10] I put the following on the board:

> A) The white moon is setting behind the white wave,
> And Time is setting with me, O!
>
> B) The white moon is setting behind the white wave,
> and Time, O! is setting with me.

I asked the students to silently read the lines, and then I called upon one of them to read "A" aloud. I advised: try to read what is really written, even if you have to alter your ordinary speech pattern. The student read adequately enough until she clearly garbled up "setting with me" and weakened the "O." I asked: Why did you mumble these words? She replied: Because I thought "B" looked better. I do not believe her response is as odd as it first appears to be. The student initially made a visual choice, preferring "B" to "A." What prompted this choice? I suggest that it stemmed from her intuitive knowledge of grammatical syntax. She expected the "O" to be where it "always" was in ordinary grammar (and speech). In other words, she was intuitively familiar with the syntax of "B." But, as she was performing "A," she began to realize that the line had something to offer that escaped her eye and her ordinary syntactic expectation. Simply, the performance was giving her experience in poetic syntax. Since this later experience was unfamiliar to her, and since she might have purely wanted to defend her original position (which probably felt more "natural" to her), she misread the line. After several oral readings of "A," she began to realize the impact of the poetic syntax, that is, the rich pathos of the ironic surprise—the speaker's stumbling upon the personal meaning of time's passing. And I think I am correct in saying that her revised readings were more true and honest, in terms of the poem *and herself*.

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[10] Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Poetry*, 3rd Edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1960).

To the Ghost of John Milton (from *Good Morning, America*)[11]

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[11] From GOOD MORNING, AMERICA by Carl Sandburg, copyright, 1928, 1955, by Carl Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

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A DAY AT THE THEATRE—WITH A DIFFERENCE

The New Orleans Educational Laboratory Theatre Project

English teachers in New Orleans schools are proving that the study of serious drama from Shakespeare to Arthur Miller need not be reserved for the upper quartile of the student population. With the help of the Educational Laboratory Theatre Project, teachers are embarking on a curriculum experiment which is aimed at making great drama meaningful to 40,000 students of varying backgrounds and abilities in the Greater New Orleans area.

The project, funded by Titles III and IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, provides for the establishment of a local resident professional theatre that performs for senior high school students in all public and parochial schools. But the visits to the theatre are not merely field trips for the students. They are the culmination of a series of carefully planned activities designed to make each student's day at the theatre a rich, multifaceted educational experience.

Under the supervision of Shirley Trusty, coordinator of the Educational Laboratory Theatre Project, students are given paperback editions of each of four plays presented during the school year. English teachers are provided with packets that contain study guides, critical and biographical essays, bibliographies, recordings, and bulletin board materials.

English departments then have the major task of integrating these materials into the English program and adapting them to the needs of their individual students. In some schools, teachers systematically correlate composition and research assignments with the study of each play. Other schools have assembly programs with students reviewing a play or discussing it before the performance. Teaching teams are often utilized, with teachers from other disciplines cooperating to give students a fuller understanding of historical or cultural backgrounds of the play.

As a further spur to imaginative teaching, panels composed of English teachers and supervisors hold discussions before the opening of each play. Dicussions typically center on topics like preparation and follow-up activities and methods for approaching a play with disadvantaged students or slow learners.

Play selection is a primary consideration in the overall plan of the Educational Laboratory Theatre Project. The plays, drawn largely from titles proposed by classroom teachers, are chosen to represent a wide variety of drama subgenres and a number of major authors. In the first two years of the project, students saw Sheridan's *The Rivals*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Wilder's *Our Town*, Thomas' *Charley's Aunt*, Miller's *The Crucible*, Shaw's *St. Joan*, and Moliere's *Tartuffe*. Dramatic types under consideration for the third season include Greek tragedy and comedy, Shakespearean tragedy and history, theatre of the absurd, modern nonabsurdist drama, and others.

The study of the major plays is supported by several related activities. Special forty-five minute assembly programs relevant to some aspect of the play under study are presented by members of the resident company on request through Miss Trusty's office. One such program, *Conscience in Conflict*, consisted of a series of excerpts from plays with themes similar to that of *The Crucible*. Other programs and activities employ a humanities approach, correlating the plays with the study in history, art, journalism, and other areas. For example, scenic director Gordon Micunis conducted a workshop for art students and presented an exhibit of student costume sketches in connection with *The Rivals* after students had investigated the styles of dress during the Restoration. Press conferences were called by director Stuart Vaughan before each play so that journalism students might question him and leading actors on any phase of the production. Teachers of third-year French throughout the city taught Moliere's *Tartuffe* in the original French. Many history teachers worked closely with English teachers during study of the background to *The Crucible* and *St. Joan*, the latter being bolstered by a special study packet on the Hundred Years' War.

Evidence of student excitement about the theatre program is abundant. The acting company has received numerous plaques from students, and individual actors often get unique and imaginative gifts, from a bowl of gumbo for actress Joanna Featherstone in honor of her first appearance in New Orleans to a set of tiny monogrammed pillows for the cast of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

However, the most gratifying student reaction is that which testifies to the classroom teachers' effectiveness in making the drama fully relevant to the students. At one school the department chairman, thinking that *Midsummer* might be a difficult assignment for the below-average student population, planned to postpone study of the paperback text until after the performance. The students promptly circulated a petition requesting pre-performance study on the grounds that they enjoyed the plays more with in-depth preparation. At the Educational Laboratory Theatre office, Miss Trusty receives stacks of letters in which students express their enthusiasm for the entire cluster of educational experiences that make their "day at the theatre" an experience of enduring worth.

Some of the letters are sophisticated analyses or reviews of performances; others are crudely expressive thank you notes. As a group, the letters show that the Educational Laboratory Theatre Project is turning teenagers on to drama. As one student writes, "At first I thought drama would be boring and that I might find myself asleep during the whole play. But to my surprise I found it so interesting and challenging that I could not have went to sleep even if I hadn't slept for three days. In fact it was better than a free movie."

MRS. LENORE MUSSOFF
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A THEMATIC APPROACH TO DRAMA

Before studying drama whose language and style are removed from the students' idiom—like that of Shakespeare or Moliere, for example, or the theatre of the absurd—deal first with relatively modern, "straight" drama. One such unit encompasses *Look Homeward, Angel, Death of a Salesman,* and *The Skin of Our Teeth.* Not only do these three plays progress from a generally familiar theatrical approach to a more experimental structure and form, but they also relate to one other in at least two important ways. They were all written by Americans and they all carry a strong theme in common: the function of family life in America. In the first two works, the family seems to play a stifling role in the lives of the individuals, whereas in Wilder's play, the family functions as the only hope for society in the course of human events.

Begin each play by setting the stage on the blackboard. Follow the playwright's descriptions, and attempt to illustrate the various settings so that the class has some general picture of how the play looks when it is played. Then, begin an in-class reading, attempting to establish certain character traits, conflicts, and themes. Do this for two days, with the assignment that the play must be read in its entirety by the third day of study. Discussion of the whole play can take another day or two.

Follow this procedure with all three plays. In the meantime, tell the students to consider a particular scene that seems especially significant which they will enact before the class. The study completed, divide into groups to prepare the scenes the students have selected. Allow two or three days for preparation and rehearsal. Move around among the groups, offering suggestions about the content of the play and for acting and directing. The groups function like this: one student introduces the scene, fitting it into the context of the play and explaining how this scene illustrates a major theme in the play. He also introduces the cast. Then, two or three students present the scene. They have memorized their parts, and one member of the group has directed them, with particular emphasis on characterization and motivated stage movement. Finally, one student serves as an evaluator. He conducts a critical discussion of the scene after it is completed. Enter into this discussion and prepare evaluation cards with comments and grades which are given each student in the group on the following day. Usually students can present two scenes a day.

You may be pleasantly amazed at how ingenious the students can be. Sometimes when they introduce their scenes, for example, they assume the role of director or stage manager. They stroll casually through the audience, and as they introduce the cast, the members come into the room or "onstage" in character, or they form a picturesque tableau. Sometimes they ditto programs. And they make good use of the chalkboard, the window blinds, and the lone spotlight they borrowed from the auditorium.

Group the chairs in circles or semicircles. In one scene face the windows; in another, the door–whichever arrangement suits the needs of the scene. A minimum of makeup and costumes and a handful of props often supply that extra touch that enhances the production.

At times invite other English classes to witness the presentations and occasionally present an "Evening of Drama" in which scenes sufficient to include everyone in the class are presented for parents and friends.

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NOT ONLY FOR THE VERY YOUNG

"Why do we have to read picture books?" asked Bill.

"Such baby books!" exclaimed Gail.

"I read this when I was in first grade," commented Kimberly.

These were typical comments made by sixth grade youngsters in a reading enrichment group in a New City classroom. After ten Caldecott award winning books had been distributed to the students, they were asked to just skim through and look at them. The children thought that this task was quite an odd one, but they followed directions just the same.

After a period of about half an hour, the teacher asked the students to cite similarities in the books. Some of the things listed included:

—they were all easy to read;
—they had many pictures;
—many were illustrated in black-and-white;
—some were illustrated in color;
—two were by one author, Robert McCloskey;

and it was observed that each text had a golden sticker on its cover. This naturally led to a discussion of the Caldecott Medal. The children had never heard of this award and were surprised to learn that it existed.

Prior to their being told that the Caldecott Medal was given annually for excellence in illustration, the teacher discussed special honors in other areas which might be familiar to the class, such as the Academy Awards, the Nobel Peace Prize, and the Pulitzer Prize. One of the class members mentioned the Newbery Award presented annually for outstanding achievement in juvenile fiction. Brainstorming continued, and the children concluded that the honor "just had to be given for the pictures in the texts."

Several questions were then posed by the students:

—Who is Caldecott?
—Why is the award named after him?
—What does the picture on the Medal show?
—When did this award begin?
—Who were other winners?

The questions were recorded on the chalkboard, and children volunteered to come in the following day with the answers. The next morning, the many facts were uncovered. A project on the award winning books was now perfect to be launched!

Books were collected from the school and public library so that a complete selection was available to the children. After carefully reviewing and evaluating the Caldecott award winners from 1938 through 1967, each student selected two of the books to compare.

JoAnne wrote:

> The two books I have selected to compare are *The Snowy Day* and *Sam, Bangs and Moonshine. The Snowy Day* is a shorter story and has different types of illustrations than *Sams, Bangs and Moonshine* has.
>
> *The Snowy Day* is the story of a little boy and the things he does in the snow. *Sam, Bangs and Moonshine* is also the story of a child—a young girl. The books are different in that the illustrations are different. *The Snowy Day* has bright, simple, and colorful illustrations whereas the pictures in *Sam, Bangs and Moonshine* seem like shadows, lonely shadows. These illustrations are more complicated and serious than those in *The Snowy Day*.
>
> Both authors and illustrators did an excellent job in the books they worked on. They deserve to be praised.

David wrote:

> *Madeline's Rescue* and *The Biggest Bear* have very different types of illustrations. In *Madeline* the pictures are colored ink sketches. In *Bear* the pictures are done in black and white.
>
> The books are alike, too. They are both about children and their pets. Madeline has a dog, Johnny has a bear. I loved both books because I have a dog and would love to have a bear.

The children were also given the opportunity to rate each of the books. The rating form below was distributed to each student:

EVALUATION FORM
for the Caldecott Books–1938-1967

I. The Rating Scale

Mark the proper letters in the rating column:

E — Excellent drawings
VG — Very good drawings
G — Good drawings
F — Fair drawings
P — Poor drawings

II. The Books

		Rating Column
1938	Lathrop, Dorothy ANIMALS OF THE BIBLE	
1939	Handforth, Thomas MEI LI	
1940	d'Aulaire, Ingri & Edgar P. ABRAHAM LINCOLN	
1941	Lawson, Robert THEY WERE STRONG AND GOOD	
1942	McCloskey, Robert MAKE WAY FOR DUCKLINGS	
1943	Burton, Virginia Lee THE LITTLE HOUSE	
1944	Thurber, James MANY MOONS	
1945	Field, Rachel PRAYER FOR A CHILD	
1946	Petersham, Maud & Miska THE ROOSTER CROWS	
1947	MacDonald, Golden THE LITTLE ISLAND	
1948	Tresselt, Alvin WHITE SNOW, BRIGHT SNOW	
1949	Hader, Berta & Elmer THE BIG SNOW	
1950	Politi, Leo SONG OF THE SWALLOWS	
1951	Milhous, Katherine THE EGG TREE	
1952	Will and Nicolas FINDERS KEEPERS	

The Books		Rating Column
1953	Ward, Lynd THE BIGGEST BEAR	
1954	Bemelmans, Ludwig MADELINE'S RESCUE	
1955	Perrault, Charles CINDERELLA	
1956	Langstaff, John THE FROG WENT A-COURTIN'	
1957	Udry, Janice May A TREE IS NICE	
1958	McCloskey, Robert TIME OF WONDER	
1959	Cooney, Barbara CHANTICLEER AND THE FOX	
1960	Ets, Marie Hall, and Labastida, Aurora NINE DAYS TO CHRISTMAS	
1961	Robbins, Ruth BABOUSHKA AND THE THREE KINGS	
1962	Brown, Marcia ONCE A MOUSE	
1963	Keats, Ezra Jack THE SNOWY DAY	
1964	Sendak, Maurice WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE	
1965	de Regniers, Beatrice MAY I BRING A FRIEND?	
1966	Hogrogian, Nanny ALWAYS ROOM FOR ONE MORE	
1967	Ness, Evaline SAM, BANGS AND MOONSHINE	

Outcomes:

Many valuable learning experiences grew out of this project:

—children became aware of the various types of illustrations in books, for example, the woodcuts in *Once a Mouse*, the collage technique in *The Snowy Day*, the strong use of black and white drawings in *The Biggest Bear*, the rhythmical drawings in *The Little House*.

—they were able to see the progress made in book publishing in a mere thirty years.

—the project provided the opportunity for children to review books grown up on and to look at superior trade books they would have missed in their school lives.

—they had the opportunity to rate honestly the books despite the fact that they knew they were outstanding contributions to the field of children's literature.

—they learned to criticize, analyze, evaluate, and compare.

The excitement which was generated daily made this a beneficial experience to all concerned. To hear sixth graders chuckling over the experiences of ducklings on busy Boston streets, to see them being carried away with Max to *Where the Wild Things Are*, and to listen to them sing the song from *The Frog Went A-Courtin'* was enough to show that the time spent was well invested, and perhaps more than anything else, we saw proof over and over again that picture books are *not only* for the very young.

Rose Roberts
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INTRODUCING POETRY THROUGH POP MUSIC

Knowing that my junior English class of twenty-seven girls would react with the usual groans and depression to the announcement that we would begin studying poetry the following week, I decided I would have to do something to bring poetry alive for them.

Since poetry is closely related to songs and music and since my students spend a large part of their leisure hours listening to the radio, I thought that using several current pop tunes which are both poetic and meaningful might be a good place to begin.

I chose the following songs: "Dangling Conversation" by Simon and Garfunkle, "Twelve Thirty" by the Mamas and the Papas, "Good News Week" by the Hedgehoppers Anonymous, "Good News Week" by Jonathan King, "Beat the Clock" by the McCoys, and "Hazy Shade of Winter" by Simon and Garfunkle. I obtained a tape of these songs through a local radio station. (Most radio stations will gladly provide this service to educators.)

To awaken their interest in poetry, I told the class when we first began the unit that we would spend a few days discussing the vocabulary of poetry and that we would then have an interesting tape. I did not tell them what the tape would contain, preferring to keep this as a surprise. The day before I presented the tape, I told them that we would have a different kind of tape the following day. They came to class the next day bursting with curiosity. I handed out dittoed copies of the songs and they were, of course, delighted. Before turning on the tape, I told the girls to follow the words on their papers and to think about how the songs were like the poetry we had been talking about and what the songs were saying.

I played the entire tape through once, and we then discussed the songs. I found that those who had been having trouble grasping the concept of meter and rhythm in poetry could see it easily in the songs and could then see its significance for poetry. We spent the remainder of the period discussing the poetic structure of the songs, their possible meanings, and their relationship to each other.

I then made two assignments to be done over the weekend. The students were to scan one of the songs and find its rime scheme. They were also to compare two of the songs (the one they had scanned could be one of them) as to meaning. These assignments were to be written into a formal essay with no limit either way as to length, although I said it was to cover their topic.

I collected the papers on Monday. When I read them, I was pleasantly surprised. Their scanning of the one song was, in general, good, especially considering that the songs tended to vary their meter. The essays were the most interesting. The girls came up with some very good ideas about what the themes of the songs were, how they were similar, and how they were different. The papers as a whole showed considerable thought. Several of the girls went beyond the assignment and made some general statements about today's music and its relationship to events in the world, and music's relationship to poetry.

All considered, the tape and the succeeding assignments seemed to awaken an interest in poetry; increase the students' understanding of meter, rhythm, and rime; remove, or at least diminish, the idea that poetry is foreign to everyday life; and, from comments the girls have since made, make the students more aware of what their music is saying.

JONE M. STARR
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THE NUMBERS GAME IN ANALYZING FICTION

Why does a teacher teach? To serve others. Why does an English teacher teach literature? To have the service rejected. At least my tenth grade students thrust rejection at me every time I assigned a short story or novel, perhaps because they were frustrated by the lack of concrete rules for interpretation. In history they could memorize names and dates; in math, theorems; in biology, the legs of a crayfish. But in studying literature, with little experience of life and less in wide reading, the students had to rely on their opinions alone and frequently found that these opinions cooled in the air during classroom analysis. Yet they had nothing definite with which to correct errors. So they gave up on literature, thinking that only someone with a super brand of ESP could ever understand it.

Their failure was my failure until I decided to follow their recipe instead of mine. If they digested algebra better than Austen, I would have to coat literature with a layer of equations. So to each of four fiction elements I assigned a series of numbers representing an evaluation of the skill with which the author had manipulated the particular element. After the student had reasoned a numerical rating for each element, he averaged the four ratings to get an overall rating for the story or book. The following is the system that evolved:

THE RATING SYSTEM TO BE USED
1=Great 2=Good 3=Fair 4=Poor

I. Main Plot: Consider the central conflict and the action that results from it.

1 Rating: The suspense, caused by a single conflict, is built up gradually and sustained throughout most of the book,

its solution coming only in the last quarter of the book.

2 Rating: The suspense, caused by a single conflict, is built up gradually, but the conflict is solved before three fourths of the book is over.

3 Rating: The conflicts are episodic. They are solved shortly after each is introduced.

4 Rating: There is little suspense because there is hardly any sharply defined conflict.

II. Characterization: Consider only the two, three, or four main characters.

1 Rating: The main characters are fully developed with good and bad qualities. They change as a result of the conflicts in which they are involved.

2 Rating: The main characters are fully developed, but they do not change as a result of the conflicts in which they are involved.

3 Rating: The main characters are not fully developed. They are one-sided, either all good or all bad throughout most of the book. But they do, toward the end, seem to change because of the conflicts in which they are involved.

4 Rating: The main characters are not developed, and they do not change as a result of the conflicts in which they are involved.

III. Setting: Consider physical, social, and historical environment.

1 Rating: The settings play a part in the conflict (either causing it or intensifying it) and help to show what kind of people the characters are.

2 Rating: The settings cause the conflict but are not used to advantage in pointing out the personalities of the characters.

3 Rating: The settings are suitable to the type of characters portrayed but have nothing to do with the conflict.

4 Rating: The settings are just there. They have nothing to do with either the conflict or the characterization.

IV. Style: Consider the organization of the story, sentence structure, and diction.

1 Rating: The author almost always chooses the right words to give the feeling of character and action. He is easily

understood. His diction is appropriate to the characters, action, and environment.

2 Rating: The author's diction is appropriate to the characters, action, and environment. Much of the time his meaning is clear, but there are several passages which are dull and/or hard to understand.

3 Rating: The author's diction is not always appropriate to the characters, action, and environment. There are a great many passages which are dull, unnecessary, and/or hard to understand.

4 Rating: The author's diction is unsuited to his characters and environment. Almost the whole book is dull and/or difficult to understand.

Inevitably this new approach did not win friends for literature and acceptance of the teacher immediately. The readers for pleasure complained of the "awful" amount of thinking involved. The nappers who had nodded through previous assignments on fiction elements had to be retaught these basics before they could evaluate them. The nonverbal types were finally rewarded by finding that their ratings compared favorably with those of the class as a whole, but still had difficulty defending their ratings in words. Nevertheless, after applying this algebra-in-English system for a semester, most students turned in written book analyses showing far better interpretations than they had been capable of eighteen weeks before. And even though some still did not appreciate having to think so strenuously, they appreciated the results on their report cards. They were discovering that in studying literature, maybe some extra work substitutes well for some super ESP.

Some of the first-year resistance to this fiction analysis has waned with succeeding classes of tenth and eleventh graders to whom I have introduced it. The reason for this, I believe, is that I no longer present the rating practices to the students as a system. Instead, we practice it a part at a time on short works until they are thoroughly familiar with one element and its possible role in a story. For example, we might read several short stories, such as "The Pit and the Pendulum," "Young Goodman Brown," "Top Man," "The Sculptor's Funeral," and "Flight," just to rate the setting in each. After reading a story, a student rates it privately but should be prepared to defend his rating orally in class. This seems to encourage a student to search for much back-up material to support his opinion, for he knows if he rates setting "2," he had better be able to match point for point the student who has rated it "3," or "2" will lose his case.

Not all work on rating individual elements is oral, though. Occasionally it is a good idea to have the students write an impromptu paragraph on a preassigned story, giving their rating of the element under consideration and explaining their reasoning. This helps the student in two ways: he gets practice in verbalizing a number rating, and he gets a chance to show how well he alone is mastering analysis, without promptings from the ideas of others. If some students are then having trouble understanding what to look for in a story—for example, recognizing social environment—the teacher can correct the difficulty before moving on to another element.

After practice in recognizing and rating each of the four elements separately, the next step is to let each class section choose a novel that they particularly want to read, regardless of its classic merits. If they cannot agree on one, they may break into smaller groups with common reading interests. The only instruction given them is to read with the idea of rating the elements in the novel and arriving at an overall rating for the book. They have six class periods to conduct their discussions and are graded only on the quality of their contribution to the group, not on their personal ratings.

Working with a novel in a group achieves several purposes. First of all, the students are for the first time struggling to put all the elements together for an overall rating, and this deserves group efforts. A student wrestling alone with such a project can easily get discouraged and give up. Secondly, because a novel is longer than the short fiction to which students are accustomed, they are likely to miss several nuances by themselves, but every student catches at least one, so by the time their analysis is finished, each rating has been soundly backed up by numerous examples. A student then has a little recourse to the old cry, "I still think my opinion is right, because you can't prove it's wrong." Finally, because the novel is one chosen by the students themselves, it will be one enjoyed by the majority. Allowed to rate such a book by himself, a student is usually tempted to adjust the individual ratings when he sees the overall rating fall short of his personal enjoyment. Because the students work in a group, the temptation is canceled, since each must justify aloud and succumb to the weight of evidence. This is precisely the major benefit of the rating system: it illustrates the difference between artistic achievement and personal enjoyment when there is a dichotomy. A student who can comprehend that point has already moved far toward mature reading.

Following this group work on a novel, the students are put out to graze on their own among novels. They are given a formula for writing rating reports on a minimum number of novels to be read and are encouraged to do extra credit work if they wish. The minimum individual readings must be rated according to all four elements, but extra credit work can concentrate on one or two, at the discretion of the student. I have found that less thorough analysis for extra credit work not only encourages more reading but also gives unsure students a chance to shine in areas where they feel most secure.

Sometimes I look at the rating sheet and think, "This is no better than a 'Rate Your Mate' questionnaire. Why structure one of the last freedoms, the interpretation of what one reads?" But I have seen poor students who can hardly read rate the characterization in *The Red Badge of Courage* "1" because the conflict changed Henry from a boy to a man. Excellent students who had dismissed Hawthorne as archaic have learned to admire *The Scarlet Letter* because when they rated style they discovered his rolling sentences, abstract diction, and organizational divisions perfectly suited to the cancer of sin growing in an individual. And average students are just smug because they are convinced the ratings remove demands for originality from them. Freed from their typical response of rebellion against abstract thinking, this group frequently arrives at the most creative insights of all. When I remember these successes, I decide to continue the rating system for yet one more year.

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ORGANIZING A CLASS LIBRARY

Every English teacher will agree that ideally each classroom should be equipped with a paperback library of popular titles. The same teachers will maintain that the cost of such a venture and the amount of work involved are prohibitive. Three years ago, I decided to stop making excuses and start that class library. Today, my classes enjoy using a private paperback collection of over six hundred books! Below is a detailed description of how I started and increased the collection. I hope that others will find the idea worthwhile and the method simple enough to try it in their own schools.

Very early in the school year, I broached the subject of a class library to my students. They agreed to contribute fifty cents each to buy books which would then be read and enjoyed by everyone. A representative from each class and I went to a neighborhood book store and selected appealing titles. The proprietor was more than willing to give us a substantial discount. In addition, students were asked to contribute personal copies of books they had read and liked.

A committee in charge of preparing the books for circulation set to work. They covered each book with clear Contac shelf paper to protect it and increase its life span. Next, the team of workers pasted pockets and date due slips in the back of each book. A blue card to fit in the pocket was filled out for each work. It contained the title, author, and price at the top and three columns for the borrower to fill out—Name, Advisory Number, and Date Due. For the finishing touch, they stapled strips of shoelaces or ribbon to the back covers to be used as bookmarks and prevent the tearing or bending of pages. A small calendar was pasted on top of a file box containing alphabetical index cards. Each student received a library card, each class selected a librarian, and we were in business!

Once the library was set up, the procedure was very simple. At the beginning and end of every period, students browse through the shelves and select the books which interest them. They pull out the blue card and fill in their name and advisory number. While they are doing this, they notice the names already on the card to see if any of their friends have read the same book. This peer recommendation is far stronger than any I could give.

When the card is filled out, the student gives the book to the class librarian, who checks the calendar and writes the date due on the card and in the book on the date due slip. The card is then filed in the box in alphabetical order according to the title. This system makes it very easy to put the card back in the book when it is returned to the shelf and to tell which titles are currently in circulation.

Back at his seat, the student writes the name of his new book and the author on his personal library card. In this way, he has a private and portable record of the books he has read during the year. One student told me that he was asked during a job interview what type of reading he did. Just before he panicked, he remembered his reading card, pulled it out of his wallet, and presented it to the astonished, but impressed, interviewer!

There is no fine for overdue books, but periodically the librarians scan the files and remind readers which books are due. Losses are reported to the librarians who collect the listed price from the pupils. The money is used to replenish the collection.

The library has grown from fewer than fifty to more than six hundred books in a very short time. The largest amount of work was done at the very beginning. Now, with my supervision and the help of the librarians, the library really runs itself. My students constantly amaze me with the number of books they read and enjoy. They seem to feel that their initial small investment has paid off in an inexhaustible supply of attractive and interesting books.

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HIGH NOTES ON HARDY

After much discussion of Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as to its superb characterization, the role of Fate and Chance, life in Wessex during the nineteenth century, parallel scenes, illustrations of melodrama, the wealth of Biblical and classical allusions, irony, and everything else that makes this a fascinating book, my students decided that they would like to do musical versions of those scenes that they particularly liked for our monthly book club meeting. Committees were selected; and although their versions were certainly not artistically perfect, they felt that the colorful rustics who sat around Peter's Finger, the tavern in Mixen's Lane, reading aloud Lucetta's love letters, would have applauded vigorously.

For example, Joshua Jopp, Nance Mockridge, and other patrons of the tavern sang to the tune of "Alexander's Ragtime Band":

Come on and hear, Come on and hear,
Of the scandal in our town.

Another group hears the intoxicated Henchard declare:

All I want is to sell my wife,
To be rid of my toil and strife,
To live a bachelor's life,
Oh, wouldn't it be loverly?

Still another costumed group decided that, although the scene wasn't in the book, they would portray the feelings of Casterbridge gossipers about the skimmity ride as they danced and chanted:

Tonight! Tonight!
There was a skimmity ride
Ah ha! Ah ha!
And now someone must hide!

Lucetta's plea for the return of her letters, Abel Whittle's being scolded for his tardiness and receiving harsh warnings from his employer, the choir singing of destruction coming from "ill-got riches"—all these and others were student selections. Perhaps avid Hardy fans would have awarded the students oosers instead of Oscars; but total participation, interest, originality, and much fun made it an entertaining book club meeting.

III. COMPOSITION

COMPOSITION

Seven articles are included in this section dealing with the ubiquitous problem of motivating, producing, and evaluating written composition. Most of the specific suggestions are geared toward college students, but they are practical and flexible enough to be used by other students as well.

"Learning to Write: Misery or Joy?" is an account of an eight-month project designed to make writing more joy than misery. Involved in the experiment were four groups of senior English students.

Three articles describe practices aimed at involving other facets of the language arts in order to strengthen the composition program. "English, Spoken and Written" deals with a successful experiment which combined the traditional freshman courses in composition and speech. "A Learning Approach to Composition and Literature" shows how two college instructors used a variety of ways to improve both reading and writing skills, utilizing the novel device of having students collaborate in writing papers based on simple research and printing the final versions in a monograph. "Relating Reading and Writing Skills" advocates using the newspaper to teach organization.

"A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to English 1-A" explores the idea of emphasizing humor in freshman composition courses and describes what appears to be a workable plan.

"A Pre-Writing Plan for Remedial Students" gives in explicit detail a three-step process designed to eliminate the fear of writing among remedial writing students.

"Slides: A Focus for Imagery" is an account of how slides may be used to teach imagery in a poetry or writing course.

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LEARNING TO WRITE: MISERY OR JOY?

Teaching students to write and to enjoy the experience has plagued high school teachers of English from the day of the little red school house to that of our modern ranch-style houses of learning. We teachers of composition shudder when we face the task of planning a unit of writing. It isn't the grammar we mind or the sentence structure or even the mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. I think what causes our souls to shrivel and curl at the thought of introducing a writing exercise is the reaction we feel sure will come from the girls and boys sitting in front of us.

How many students have we not met during our years of teaching secondary English who were convinced that (a) they had nothing to write about, (b) they did not know how to write, or (c) nobody wanted to read what they had written. Personally I have always enjoyed writing. I cannot remember a time when I did not experience pleasure in scribbling down my ideas, not to fulfill an assignment, but merely to satisfy some inner urge to get my thoughts onto paper. The question of how to get over to students this joy of creating has frequently both bothered and challenged me. During the past year, the opportunity to experiment was offered, and this article is a summary of that experience. Although literature formed part of the program, my experiment was concerned mainly with writing.

In an all-girl central high school in upstate New York, I worked with four groups of senior English students, grouped homogeneously. Their IQ's ranged from 91 to 142. I am mentioning the intelligence range so that it can be eliminated as valueless as far as motivation and enthusiasm are concerned. The quality of work varied, of course, but the pleasure of working showed very little variation among the groups.

Many times in the past, students had told me that their greatest difficulties in writing stemmed from not knowing how to begin, from a feeling of inadequacy that made writing a slow, laborious process, and finally from being unable to say what they really wanted to say. I took these three difficulties and worked on them over an eight-month period. The results were gratifying.

The first problem we tackled was how to begin paragraphs and themes. To provide motivation, I introduced them to pattern writing which they found fascinating. One of the first paragraphs we studied followed this pattern: (1) a moment of inactivity, (2) initiation of action, (3) follow-through with activity, (4) cessation of movement, (5) review of movement. I read them a paragraph from the short story from which I had taken the pattern. As a class, we then formulated a paragraph similar in structure. The paragraph below was composed by one of the four writing groups:

(1) John paused uncertainly at the top of the ski slope and looked down at the people below him. (2) He dug his poles into the hard packed snow and began his sweeping descent. (3) The wind stung his face and whistled around his sticks poised above the surface of the snow. (4) Swinging into a wide arc, he came to a gradual stop at the bottom of the hill and swirled around to face the steep descent. (5) It seemed impossible that he had kept safely within those narrow walls of snow and landed safely from that hazardous jump.

We made no effort to use technical terms. Although many of these students enjoyed skiing, there were others who would have found the use of technical language inhibiting. This paragraph was composed at the board in one of the average groups. When a student read it aloud, the class agreed that it sounded "good."

The next step was to get a paragraph from each student; for this purpose we discussed other topics that could be made to fit into this pattern. Some of the suggestions were an astronaut waiting on the pad for blast-off; motor boats, horses, or cars lined up for the crack of the pistol; a girl waiting to come downstairs to meet her date for a school dance; a football player waiting for the whistle to begin the play. Once the students warmed up to the exercise, the suggestions came readily. After we had reviewed the pattern, the students were free to select one of the topics suggested in class or to use one of their own ideas and write a five-sentence "word picture." The assignment was due the next day.

To give every student a chance to share her writing with others, we divided the class into five groups of five or six each during the next period. The students nominated and voted for a class chairman whose term would last for two months. Then each group named a chairman alphabetically within the group; thus each member of the group had a turn in conducting the individual readings of her group. She established the order of the readings, and after each member of her group had read her paragraph, she conducted a secret ballot to select the best of the five or six paragraphs. When all groups had finished, the class chairman took over, and the best paragraph selected in each group was read by the author for the entire class.

Because this procedure was followed every two weeks, there was danger that the same students who were gifted in writing would be chosen over and over again. The criteria for judging were changed each time: best writing, most interesting material, most unusual incident, most humorous portrayal of character, greatest improvement in development of an idea. The students responded to this attempt to spread encouragement and praise, so that most of the students received a chance to read their work before the class. Praise of peers proved to be a powerful stimulus to better work.

Before discussing the other difficulties mentioned above, I would like to follow through with the procedure in regard to this first paragraph. At the close of the second class period, students handed in their work which I criticized with marginal suggestions and returned to them within a week at the time of a personal interview held outside the daily class period. My approach was positive, and the marks were in numbers rounded out in five's. Within a week from the time she received her corrected paper, the student could revise her paragraph and return the revision stapled to the original for further grading. For the first paragraph, she would receive the full mark merited on the revised copy. For further paragraphs and themes, her recorded mark was the average between the mark on her original paper and that of her revised one. This provided motivation for revisions of high quality and kept student interest at a peak.

Once the students began to feel pride in their writing, the other two difficulties mentioned were easier to handle. Somewhere along the line of their writing experiences, many students begin to feel that their writing must resemble that of the nineteenth century novelists if they are to reach that elusive goal of beginning writers–style. As a result, their writing becomes artificial and, even to themselves, unsatisfying. To combat this tendency, I asked the students to write just the way they talked and to write rapidly as though they were telling the incident or describing the scene to a friend. After they had completed the paragraph, they could go back to revise for misspelled words and mechanical errors. But they were asked not to supply "fancy" words for the commonplace ones they had used. Later when I had taught the ways to vary sentence structure, they could also revise for greater variety in sentence form. Here again I asked them to try to keep their writing simple and clear. The result of this method was that most of the students found they were saying the things they really meant to say. They were no longer losing their thought in an attempt to sound sophisticated or scholarly.

Some of the other pattern forms we used for paragraphs were (a) a person enters a room, pauses, moves toward an object, picks up something, and sits down; (b) the writer (first person) comes to the top of a hill or building, describes what he sees in an orderly procedure (from near to distant or from distant to near), and gives a one sentence generalization; (c) the writer makes a statement about something he likes or dislikes, has or wishes he had, and then gives reasons for his views. This last type leads naturally into the various standard methods for developing a topic sentence.

When the classes had moved on to longer themes, then the patterns also expanded. For the first long theme, we took two sides of a question. One of these opening sentences was "Although a college education has many advantages, there are other effective ways of preparing for job security"; the other was "Although there are many ways of preparing for job security, a college education is a tremendous asset today." The students could select either of these viewpoints. The topic was developed into a four-paragraph theme in which the two middle paragraphs considered the two sides of the question. An oral discussion preceded the written assignment.

In all the patterns we used, once a student felt independent and confident of her ability to handle the topic without the aid of the pattern "crutch," she was free to do so. Some students held on to the patterns or some adaptation of the patterns throughout the course. Most of them, however, began devising their own patterns, which turned out to be very effective forms for outlining and organizing their material.

Here are a few descriptive and narrative themes that were written early in the second semester. They show simplicity of language and vividness of detail, two of our early goals in striving for clarity.

> Max lifted another heavy box and heaved it high over his head on to the box car in front of him. It was evening and getting slightly chilly but Max was hot and sweaty from a hard day's work. On either side of him men were loading other cars, some talking, some

> singing, some groaning. Max worked silently, shutting out the noise and commotion on the dirty, crowded platform. He threw his last box on to the platform of the car and walked inside the building.
>
> After punching his card, he went into the washroom. He washed his grubby hands and face under the garish glow from the one bare lightbulb overhead. He tried to comb his hair and straighten his coat in the cracked mirror. Many self-appointed artists' scribblings had practically obliterated the drab green paint on the wall.
>
> Finally he set out for home just as the street lights were going on. Masses of people scurried by him letting him hear snatches of conversations. The smell of the street and the people and the shops blended. The effect was familiar, not offensive to Max. He bought a paper from the boy on the corner, tucked it under his arm, pulled his cap down low on his forehead and began to walk toward his apartment, one of the hundreds in the buildings towering above him.

The pattern was loosely that of a person's engagement in an activity, termination of this activity, and engagement in another activity. Here is a second paper using the same form.

> The morning fog was still heavy when bus driver #29 entered the depot. The stale air of the cluttered station went unnoticed by Herbie. Other employees hurried about preparing their busses for a long day of delivering people to their destinations. As usual, Herbie gathered his daily materials together. He packed his old black bag and walked to the window to see if his bus was ready. The door of the bus was open indicating that the bus was fueled and ready for the run. Herbie pulled on his thin gray jacket and visored hat and walked toward the door.
>
> The bright sunshine felt warm on Herbie's face. He lingered outside a little longer than usual today to chat with a friend. After a few minutes, he boarded the bus and turned on the motor, making it roar. Exactly at 7:40 just as he did every morning, he began his daily route.
>
> It was dark when Herbie headed back to his station. He was exhausted and it was good to see the old office building again. He deposited the coin box at the teller's window. At last he could go home and relax.

The following pattern was developed by a student toward the end of the course. The only requirement was that it be written as though seen through the eyes of an observer who would show some reaction to the person, place, or thing described.

> The small store smelled of freshly baked bread. The salesgirl liked the drifting odors and hummed as she straightened the shelves. The store was quiet except for the constant drone of the two ovens working at top speed, a sound which the salesgirl hardly noticed since she was accustomed to it. In the showcase were rows of enticing pastries from dark brown chocolate cakes to fluffy white cream puffs. On the first shelf of the bread rack were square loaves of bread in blue and white wrappers; the second shelf held round loaves in a plain white cover; ordinary long loaves without any covering were on the top shelf. The salesgirl leaned against the cash register and stared out the window.
>
> Suddenly the bell above the door tinkled and she turned to face her first customer. He was a short, stout man with graying hair and soft brown eyes. His wrinkled face was framed by a square, firm jaw and thick, bushy eyebrows. He wore a worn gray jacket with a broken zipper and patched blue work pants.
>
> In broken English he asked for a long loaf of bread. The straight full rows were broken as the salesgirl reached up to take the loaf from the top shelf. With gnarled brown hands he dug deep into his pocket and pulled out a frayed black leather wallet falling apart at the seams. Twenty-eight cents. That was all he had in the scuffed purse. He handed it to her and took the loaf of bread. Then he settled the brown bag under his arm and shuffled out of the shop.

None of these selections is great literature. It is doubtful if any of these students will ever receive rave notices from magazine editors. The important thing is that they enjoyed writing and began to experience confidence in their ability to say what they wanted to say.

During the last week of the course, I asked the students to fill out questionnaires that would help me evaluate the course. Among the 118 who returned the questionnaires, seven felt that they had made very little progress in developing skill in writing; four felt that they had made some progress but they still did not like to write; three did not answer this question. The remaining 104 felt that their writing had improved during the year and that the training in informal organization of material was a great help in handling their research paper. Strange to say, they enjoyed both the research involved and the writing of this final paper.

A teacher of literature knows the joy of dealing with great ideas as discussed by great writers in the literature he reads with his students. He can watch his students open their minds, evaluate opinions, develop a philosophy of life, and, hopefully, acquire an honesty and an integrity that can be reached only through clear thinking and an earnest search for an ideal with which to identify.

Language skills as subject matter do not often carry built-in motivation as literature does. In teaching them, the teacher has five basic goals: to teach his students to read, to listen, to think, to speak, and to write. Writing is placed last on the list purposely because this skill is difficult not only for the student to learn, but for the teacher to impart. What made last year's experience so rewarding was that the students began to write more easily and to find some satisfaction in what they had written. A child must learn to walk before he can run. Last June these students stood upright and took their beginning steps with confidence. Perhaps college or life will teach them to run.

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RELATING READING AND WRITING SKILLS

Students in mixed ability groups benefit from a dual reading-writing exercise in which the teacher uses the overhead projector. The objective of the exercise is to demonstrate that reading and writing are a two-way street and that much of what we read is organized on the same principles we try to teach in composition. Much of the impact of the exercise derives from the use of freshly current material—transparencies made from news and editorial articles.

In a study of the newspaper, an important objective is to help students distinguish between fact and opinion. First, a straight news story is projected concerning, let us say, some phase of the Vietnam conflict; then, an editorial is presented which offers an interpretation of the news. Here, a quick juxtaposition helps students realize how an editorial writer uses a line of reasoning and language (especially modifiers) which reflect his thesis and reveal his attitude toward the subject.

Two editorials are then presented: one, a representative "Hawk" position; the other, a "Dove." Again, by juxtaposition, students are helped to see how each writer structures his line of reasoning and how each employs semantically "loaded" expressions to reinforce the thesis of his editorial as well as to control the reader's emotional reaction to it.

The organization of the argument is an element which can be examined through the projected transparencies. Students are called to grease-pencil the topic sentences of each of the paragraphs and to mark sentences containing details related to and supporting the topic sentence. What emerges is an outline that lays bare the writer's plan of presentation, from introduction of the topic to points of argument to his proposal at or near the end of the editorial.

Now the teacher assigns an essay to the class. Much material on the topic has been presented in class so that the students are not going into the assignment "cold." The teacher asks them to incorporate some of the new words they have learned, to organize their editorials on the models offered in the exercise, and to argue some definite thesis.

Usually, the resulting essays are superior to previous essays as a result of the highly structured assignment, as well as the student's increased awareness of logical organization and connotative qualities of language.

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SLIDES: A FOCUS FOR IMAGERY

Slides provide a useful and entertaining method of teaching imagery in a poetry or writing course. I used some during a workshop on imagery in two composition/introductory literature courses. First I showed the slide (an excellent attention focuser, especially in the dark) and asked the students to examine it very closely (awareness test). Then I switched it off and asked them what they saw. They were surprised to discover that what some saw, others did not. For example, in a slide of Asian farm women, one boy saw crude machinery while a girl who didn't see the machinery at all commented on the arrangement of the figures. We discussed this phenomenon as an example of subjectivity and relativity, why it is so difficult to find objective witness of even the most static external (the blind men and the elephant motif); and as an example of how people reveal themselves by what they see (a large projective test).

After we had enumerated everything we saw—I asked if they were sure there weren't other animals in the picture (there weren't) and some weren't *sure*—I switched the slide on again, and we discussed how the actual picture differed from what we had imagined. I tied these discrepancies to Suzanne Langer's concept of symbolic transformation of experience as inherent in the human perception of reality. We then discussed various ways of heightening this symbolic transformation by selection according to one principle of unity. One student noticed that the triangular shapes of coolie hats, sheafs of wheat, and squad of ducks plus the angle of the shot all together formed an abstract pattern (a true discovery because accidental on the photographer's part); another noted the groups of people, ducks, and wheat and suggested a possible relationship between them: ducks eat wheat, people eat ducks (shades of Hamlet); another noted the unity between human, animal, and natural worlds. We talked about heightening a description through certain moods: some saw the picture as bleak (recognizing their conditioned responses toward oriental women working and Vietnamese people suffering); others saw the scene as peaceful (fertility, women smiling); a few rather scientifically saw it as the activity of a semiprimitive culture. We noted the difference involved in describing this scientifically and describing it poetically.

The final step in this process of examining the slide was for the students to take notes and write a paragraph based on the slide but heightened according to one principle of unity. In response to the slide of three Chinese children (one strapped to the back of another, ragged clothing and melancholy expressions but not starving), one boy rendered his paragraph as the dramatic monologue of one of the "orphans," with much imaginative fervor but not much grasp of Chinese idiom. Another played up the contrast of light and shadow in the picture as symbolic of the children's deprivation; another described the group as if they were a family (father, mother, and baby), thus emphasizing their premature burdens; another focused on their eyes, discerning different expressions of hope, resignation, and despair in each.

In some cases it was necessary to have students rewrite to cut irrelevant material and to heighten one dominant impression. I then shared the various perspectives by dittoing all the paragraphs and discussing each with the whole class. A further question the teacher could ask in a poetry or fiction course or after students have done their own writing is this: How would Cummings or Eliot or Dylan Thomas; Faulkner, Salinger, or James Baldwin handle this slide? What would each see in it, and how would he express what he saw?

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ENGLISH, SPOKEN AND WRITTEN

Can the traditional freshman course in college composition be combined to advantage with the traditional freshman course in speech? And can the combination be taught to advantage in an untraditional manner by a team of professors, one from the Department of English and the other from the Department of Speech, both holding forth in the same room at the same time to make carefully planned but unrehearsed presentations of their combined subject matters to the same fifty freshmen? Described thus, such an experiment may suggest bedlam, but it wasn't bedlam. It was instead one of the most stimulating experiences to come our way in many years of teaching. The freshmen were not the only ones who learned from it; we who taught also learned much, proving to ourselves what we had long suspected, that language should not be fragmented instructionally into disparate courses, one for oral and the other for written expression, but should be presented whole as a functioning entity whose parts are inextricably, systematically, and meaningfully related.

The experiment covered three successive years, with three successive generations of freshmen at Paterson State College, New Jersey, from 1964 to 1967. Dubbed *LA 110-111: The English Language, Spoken and Written*, it was an interdepartmental curricular project combining freshman composition with the introductory course in speech. The first two years of the course were periods of trial and error during which we learned that a teaching team of four was unwieldy, that a hundred freshmen were too many, and that the effectiveness of instruction depended heavily on scheduling and room facilities. But we learned also, with growing excitement, that composition and speech combine to the advantage of each and to the enjoyment of both the students and the teachers. On this basis, we went into the third year.

In the third year, we hit our stride. The teaching team was reduced from four instructors to two—one from English, the other from speech—alike in educational philosophy but different in interests, experience, and background. Fifty freshmen, rather than a hundred, were selected at random by computer and assigned to the experiment. The course met three times a week and was so scheduled that we had all fifty freshmen simultaneously in one large room but had access at the same time to an adjacent small room. The arrangement enabled us to divide the class at will, in the middle of a period if advisable. Scheduling also included a consultation period common to students and team for individual conferences. The course held for two semesters, beginning in September with the fifty freshmen as they entered the college and carrying them through until June of the same academic year. Upon its successful completion, the course offered the student six credits for the year's work, to satisfy institutional requirements for English 110 (three credits) and Speech 110 (three credits) in the fundamentals of composition and speech. The college required a syllabus and a schedule of class activities from the team but left us otherwise free to experiment and made available to us the rooms, materials, and equipment with which to experiment. As an instructional situation, it was an academic dream come true. The third year became a memorable experience for the teaching team and the freshmen.

Because we had the students for two semesters instead of only one, we came to know each on an intimate basis that helped us personalize instruction to a degree beyond anything either of us had reached previously alone as individual instructors working within the limits of the conventional single-semester courses in our separate departments of composition and speech. Under the stimulus of the increased personal contact, our fifty experimental freshmen responded gratifyingly, often volubly, not always happily, but eventually successfully. In fact, by the end of the year their performance in written and oral work was demonstrably better and more extensive than that of their peers whom we had in our conventional one-semester courses. Their performance on standardized and teacher-made tests was also superior to that of their peers, but we do not know as yet whether the difference was statistically significant; we had not at that time imposed upon the experiment the necessary controls to make valid analyses of variance and covariance. The statistics must wait until a later year. We were feeling our way.

As the third-year team, we had laid our tentative plans for the year's experimental work, determined to integrate oral and written assignments throughout. For example, after a student had presented his ideas orally in a speech to the class, he made a similar presentation in written form, his former listening audience thus becoming his reading audience by means of projector. Our aim in such an activity was to show him that, while oral and written composition share the same logic, the same need for analysis, and the same outline, they are not the same skill but must make use of two different techniques—one aural, the other graphic. Class discussions sprang from reading and the students' writing and from a field trip that included theatre attendance. For the most part, class activities regularly demanded the students' active participation. We on the teaching team deliberately avoided lecturing and preferred to make ourselves merely two discussants within the class. Approximately half the time during the year was spent with the fifty freshmen in one group; the rest of the time, we divided them on whatever basis was desirable at the moment. An in-class essay, for instance, revealed twenty students in need of work on punctuation; we segregated them for a brief period of intensive instruction, while the thirty not needing remediation did advanced writing that had developed from a speech assignment. At another time, oral work in class disclosed a small group needing speech therapy, and we were able to give them special help in a small group setting while the remainder of the class discussed a novel about which they subsequently wrote.

The units of the experimental course included the following studies: the development of ideas into paragraph, essay, or speech; the organization of ideas to make meaning clear and precise; the choice of appropriate diction; the analysis of structure and style, with particular attention to beginnings and endings; the system of word-making that underlies the English language to produce vocabulary and orthography; a cursory look at generative transformational grammar; an analysis of the physiology and phonetics of speech; multiple opportunities for oral and written expression, as related to each other and derived from the same preparation; and continual emphasis on the importance of logic, reasoning, and fact.

Written assignments for the year included thirteen short pieces of prose, a substantial reference paper that went through three successive revisions under direction, a letter of application, a fable, and a poem in the style of haiku; the course concluded with in-class practice writing answers for essay examinations. The reference paper was limited to approximately 2,000 words, drafted first in the form of an essay and revised subsequently through three of the MLA style forms: the unbound essay with end notes and bibliography, the bound form with footnotes and bibliography, and the parenthetically documented form with numbered bibliography. The topic for the reference paper was chosen from the subject matter of language study, communication, advertising, or usage.

Speech assignments included the following activities for each student: group discussion; participation in a panel, symposium, or debate; persuasion; demonstration, critical listening for content and quality of performance; use of the check list in accepting criticism and, in turn, offering it to others; impromptu speech; reading aloud from poetry and prose; analysis of an advertisement, with the oral explanation supplemented visually by means of projector; recording and evaluating one's own voice by means of tapes; a study of the sounds of English and of the vocal mechanism; practice in outlining and in speaking from an outline; and attendance at student-directed plays sponsored by the Department of Speech.

Textbooks for the year's work included a collection of essays about language, a handbook for written English, a style manual, an introductory textbook in speech, a desk dictionary, and a self-instructional handbook in spelling. Additional reference work and reading were required of each student in a study of the techniques and impact of advertising, in class discussions of a novel and its author's style of writing, and in the preparation and revisions of the documented papers. As a teaching team, we prepared many materials for experimental use on the overhead projector, a few for the opaque projector. Tape recorders, films, and a few commercially prepared disk recordings were essential to the presentation of the subject matter and the evaluation of the student's performance.

Each freshman received two grades at the end of the experimental course, although we are as yet unconvinced of the wisdom of that aspect of the experiment. One mark reflected the student's competence in speech and indicated his speech skills in understanding and applying orally what he had learned. The mark in written composition assessed his ability to write clearly, grammatically, effectively, economically, and interestingly.

All students were tested for acuity of hearing, and individuals were tested for speech problems of articulation, pronunciation, and enunciation. The marking of the written work devolved principally on the team member from the Department of English but was shared by the other; similarly, the evaluation of oral work was primarily the responsibility of the team member from the Department of Speech but was shared by his co-worker.

Our objectives in the course were these: (1) to emphasize the relation of spoken to written language, to share the core of subject matter common to introductory courses in college composition and speech, to afford a saving of time by avoiding the duplication of instruction generally inescapable when the courses are offered as disparate entities in their respective departments, and to apply the time thus saved to extending and enlarging the scope of instruction; (2) through reading, class discussion, and critical analysis, to help the student think clearly and communicate effectively by both oral and written means; (3) to sharpen the student's critical appraisal of the forms of discourse, both oral and written, with special attention to exposition, its process, definition, analysis, aspects of cause and effect, comparison, contrast, logic, style, and appropriate diction; (4) to give the student some insight into the nature of the English language, to acquaint him with today's changing attitudes towards language, and to help him acquire a philosophy of language that transcends rule and recognizes linguistic evolution; (5) to develop the student's speaking voice, with attention to his personal and social needs, to give him practice in speaking and reading before an audience about whose good opinion he cares, to offer him constructive criticism to help him improve where he is weak, to reinforce his strengths by means of praise and audience approval, and to give him in turn the opportunity to listen critically while others speak; and (6) to provide, without stigma, the supplementary clinical or corrective help needed by some, but not all, students at various times in composition or in speech. At intervals throughout the year we had an open forum during which the students spoke their minds freely about the conduct and content of the course. We learned much from their candid appraisals.

To what extent did we reach our objectives? For those who want an answer stated in terms of statistical significance, we have as yet no reply. The three years of experimentation made some things increasingly clear, however; chief among them was the confirmation that speech and composition belong rightfully in combination, making a sense together that neither makes alone, demonstrating to the student that his language is a system whose conventions he must know and use if he is to make himself understood—an audible system of vocal symbols in speech, a silent system of graphic symbols in writing, both systems constituting a series of signals whose purpose is to convey ideas from one mind to another.

It was with real excitement that we on the teaching team watched the freshmen begin to gain insight into linguistic principles. It was as if the principles were newly discovered, the products of the freshmen's own independent efforts. Observing, we came to the conclusion that speech and composition have been too long separated curricularly, to the detriment of both. They need to be reunited. Separation has magnified and distorted differences and has obscured the interrelatedness of what are essentially two expressions of the same human behavior—the act of communication.

At the beginning of the experiment, we noted with dismay that students' attitudes toward speech and composition were generally unfavorable, with composition bearing the greater onus as an unpleasant, difficult, joyless task, full of rules and mysterious restrictions, demanding special talent to be found only in the creative few, avoided if possible by everyone else. We of the team dedicated ourselves to trying to change that attitude and to remove as many taboos and inhibitions as we could. We tried to free the students to a feeling of increasing power in using their language, and we deliberately fostered a positive approach to composition. How far we succeeded is not measurable at this time, but we tried.

It also became more and more apparent to us through the three years of experimentation that the success of efforts such as ours hinged largely on two factors: the mechanics of scheduling for the course and the degree of rapport between the two members of the teaching team. We learned that each of us had to be reasonably competent in the other's specialty, sharing the same general educational philosophy and some of the same enthusiasm, sensitive to each other and to each of the fifty freshmen entrusted to us each year. We learned too that team teaching requires more work than the solo effort, but that, when it is successful, it also pays doubly high dividends in results and professional satisfactions. The two of us who had the privilege of taking the experiment into its third year have had a glimpse of what college instruction can and should be. It changed us as well as our freshmen. We have seen Olympus, and, having seen, we can never be satisfied earthbound again.

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A LEARNING APPROACH TO COMPOSITION AND LITERATURE

Introduction

Two years ago we began to try in composition classes what we called "A Team Learning Approach to Freshman English."[1] Essentially, we substituted multiple for single authorship. Our students wrote papers in collaboration with their classmates. They collected information, agreed on the outline, wrote segments, rearranged them, rewrote them, and presented one paper. Each paper was part of a major topic, a chapter in a monograph, which itself was the semester's assignment. To structure both the writing process and the formation of the student groups, we evolved a complex matrix that divided the class into consistently changing groups and took them methodically through four distinct work sequences: (1) collecting information and writing; (2) editing; (3) evaluating; (4) prepublication—for fifteen final papers. As the semester progressed, tasks were superimposed upon one another so that each group had multiple jobs. A group that was collecting information and writing one paper was also editing a second paper that had been written by another group. Later, groups were performing three different tasks on three different papers—writing their own paper, editing another group's paper, and evaluating the paper of a third group. Finally, each group was responsible for preparing three papers for final publication in the monograph.

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[1] The initial experience with this technique is reported in detail in *College English*, 29, 2 (November, 1967), 135–152.

Assumptions

Of the many assumptions underlying this approach, most survived the semester:

1) Because each student would be working with the ideas and the writing of the members of his group, his familiarity with the writing of others would make him more critical of his own.
2) Because writing had a value outside of meeting a class requirement—i.e., the students were producing a monograph that was trying to say something—there would be an added incentive to learn to write.
3) Because the monograph was to be published and distributed not only to the class but also to people whom the students had interviewed and to members of the faculty, the writing situation would have that realism so often lacking in classes in which the teacher is the student's entire public.
4) Because writing a paper was spread over a period ranging from a minimum of six weeks to a maximum of twelve, in which different versions were completed and change was an expected condition, the student would discover that writing is an organic process.
5) Because the monograph would contain information which the students had not known and evaluations that they would not have been able to make at the beginning of the semester, they would have demonstrated to themselves that writing is a means by which they can learn something about a subject.

Core Aspects of the Team Learning Approach

Flexibly directed investigation can be used as the basis for experimentation with a number of approaches to the teaching of composition and literature. The team learning approach combines at least three elements which seem fundamental:

1) The teacher selects a unified topic of investigation as the semester's "content area." This topic must be divisible into components, perception of whose relationship to one another may change during the progress of the work.
2) The students plan and conduct their investigations and write their papers collaboratively. The degree, indeed the nature, of their collaboration is flexible. It can be fixed by guidelines the teacher may choose at the beginning of the course or it may be evolved by the students themselves as the work proceeds. The

essential point is that the interdependence of the students is brought into the open and is thus made amenable to adjustment.

3) Once the teacher has selected the main area of investigation and approved its division into components, the students are responsible for making decisions concerning the directions their investigations may take, the sequence in which they conduct them, and the treatment they accord the information they uncover. If the teacher attempts to prevent his students from making *any* "wrong" decisions (and if he knows they are wrong, then he knows too much and confuses serious investigations with prearranged treasure hunts), he threatens to deprive them of valuable and realistic learning experiences.

Variants of the Approach Tried in Composition Classes

Our initial design of the course, based on the fourteen-week term of the trimester calendar used at the University of Michigan, allowed for a two-week introductory period, four stages (collecting information, writing and editing, evaluating, and prepublication) of three weeks each through which each component or subtopic was to move, and a publication period coinciding with the final examination period of the term. By publication we mean the actual production of the monograph resulting from the semester's work. A professional typist prepared multilith masters from the students' manuscripts; the students proofread these and indicated final changes; these were made by the typist, and the monograph was then printed, complete with cover and plastic or seam binding. We distributed the copies after the term had ended.

The schedule planned at the beginning of each term has been used more as a guide than as an absolute. In our original concept of the course, we had planned to form new groups of students every three weeks to work on the next stage each subtopic was to pass through. We tried to adhere to this notion in our early experimentation but sometimes found this too rigid, indeed restrictive. In some cases a subtopic had been explored and treated adequately by those students who had worked on it first, while other matters required more investigation and more elaborate treatment than we had allowed time for. In other instances, the students themselves resisted, especially after the first half of the semester had passed, because the establishment of good personal working relationships, once accomplished, was too time-consuming a process to permit quadruple repetition. In one class, with only three weeks remaining in the term, the students voted to retain the groups they were in and expressed satisfaction with their decision in their final evaluations of the course.

Yet some sort of schedule is obviously necessary. Since the emphasis of the course, from class period to class period, is on the production of the final report or monograph, it is probably wisest to establish, rather arbitrarily, a few dates when each student is to report the progress he is making and the problems he is encountering, both in his individual work and as a member of a group. Such progress reports can serve to indicate each student's competence as a writer as well as an investigator, and the teacher is thus alerted to those matters to which he can usefully devote individual attention. Another technique, of course, can be the impromptu. The important thing is to keep subtopics properly subordinate and therefore to devise a schedule geared above all else to the production of the final report. Anything else threatens to vitiate the realism the team learning approach is intended to simulate.

The methods of investigation used by our students have included interviews (both random and specific), questionnaires, telephone surveys, what might be called field trips, and of course the use of books, newspapers, pamphlets—not all of them available in the library. This point deserves emphasis. The team learning approach, at least as we have experimented with it, lends itself to stressing sources of information often more up to date than the library's collections. The method is likely to take students to the library only as an initial point of departure, not as the repository of all relevant information. Since much of the writing the students did had to challenge them to use the information they had collected in original ways, we found that the printed word—i.e., someone else's report of his findings—was often the least exciting and satisfactory reference. We suggest that good writing may not rest as firmly on good reading as is sometimes assumed.

Consequently, the subjects our classes have investigated have been as contemporary as the students themselves: a Congressional election campaign; the Vietnam war as experienced in Ann Arbor; the relationship between the school as an organization and freshmen as members of it; and, most recently, topics unified only by the theme of "The City and the Student." In the latter instance, students chose specific aspects of this theme that were of interest to them (housing, transportation, recreational opportunities, politics) and were then grouped for the entire semester on the basis of their own choices. They shared the collected information but wrote both progress reports and their final reports individually. Half the class periods were spent discussing their investigations (methods, sources, questions to be answered); the other class periods were devoted more formally and perhaps more traditionally to discussions of matters confronting them in the preparation of the final report. These periods were alternated regularly with one another.

The team learning approach, in whatever form, costs money. Ideally, the class should have the services of a part-time typist; it should have suitable space and equipment (a file cabinet, access to a good duplicating machine, the usual office supplies); and it should have a sufficient budget to cover the expenses of printing the final report. The notion of a tangible, permanent, and attractive product resulting from a semester's hard work is, we have found, as much an incentive as the report itself is a reward. The work assumes a significance transcending grades. But our most recent variant of the approach, which does away with the printed class report, demonstrates the possibility of economizing. The only expense in this version was the xeroxing of information collected by some students to be made available to certain others.

Principles

The team learning approach appears to bring into play general principles that can be applied beneficially in other types of courses as well as to the inherent benefit of composition classes:

1) Make the learning process visible, put it in the open where students can experience it;
2) Make the learning process have a purpose external to the classroom;
3) Make the learning process part of or close to a realistic experience;
4) Allow errors and change to occur without penalty;
5) Have the student discover new information as a result of his own investigations.

What brings the principles into play is the switch from an emphasis on teaching to an emphasis on learning. What matters is not how the teacher transmits but rather how the student acquires. In an idealized learning situation, teachers as intermediate or secondary sources (as opposed to primary sources) are unnecessary. We ourselves, as teachers, when faced with some new problem, teach ourselves, that is, we place ourselves in a learning situation, amass our learning skills, apply them, and find a solution to our problem. More specifically, we apply skills of information gathering, of organizing data, of analysis, of writing, of editing, of presentation. The result may be a report, a paper, a resolution, a proposal. It is possible to thrust the student into the same position, a learning situation in which he must make the decisions and therefore, if he does anything, in which he must learn.

The role of the teacher in a learning situation is different from the traditional role. He creates the environment but neither defines nor limits it. He functions as consultant, as advisor, as mediator. He reserves judgment for the final product and may indeed reserve it forever. The product is the judgment that is passed on the teacher as well as on the students. But although his role is secondary, it is vital. For example, given a specific problem, the teacher would suggest what questions might be asked and what procedures might be employed in answering them. Go to this source, to that library, to this person, to that book, go to this meeting, that lecture. Whatever the students bring back forms the substantive matter of the course. If it is insufficient to form a paper, the teacher might suggest new resources, new methods of gathering data. Otherwise, he lets it be. It forms the world. It is what the students know and what they manipulate in subsequent segments of the writing process. Whether it is the most they can know is irrelevant. What matters is the capability of organizing what they have, of inferring generalizations that prove viable until the acquisition of additional knowledge changes the inference.

The Learning Approach to Literature

A variant was tried in a course entitled Major American Authors, in which the class spent half the semester on Arthur Miller. He had been a student at the University of Michigan from 1934 to 1938, and hence there are primary source materials available in Ann Arbor. In addition to reading the standard canon of Arthur Asher Miller—from *All My Sons* (1947) to *Incident at Vichy* (1964)—the class, as a group, followed what Wellek and Warren have termed the extrinsic approach to the study of literature.[2] By the end of the eight weeks the students had a thick notebook of papers.

Much of the student's research was informative generally but not specifically. A student who surveyed the literature on the Federal Theatre Project, to discover Miller's relationship to it, reported that a one-act play by Miller had been produced on a weekend in Detroit in 1938, but he didn't get much further. There were articles students wanted to read but couldn't locate. There were references to one-act plays that couldn't be followed up. Some newspaper reviews were not available. Still, because it was a cooperative effort in which each student was contributing to the total information of the class, the class gathered a substantial amount of information that approached, and in some instances surpassed in content, the material published in the four books written about Miller to date.

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[2] R. Wellek and A. Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1956).

What was the value of investigating Miller's background as a student, novice dramatist, political radical, even husband of Marilyn Monroe? Partially, in the building of perspective. The student who reads the typescript of "The Grass Still Grows" (a play Miller submitted for an undergraduate drama contest) knows a Miller different from the one seen by the student who begins with a paperback edition of *Death of a Salesman.* The student who reads the complete text of the HUAC hearings in the green paperback Congressional committee report will see *After the Fall* differently from the student who reads a biographer's brief account of Miller's testimony. The student who discovers a similarity between the main character in an early radio play and Willy Loman knows something about Miller's consistent thematic concerns that the student restricted to anthologies won't know. But more important, because more general, is the fact that this technique, so dependent upon the extrinsic approach to literature, leads into the intrinsic approach. It provides clues to the meaning of words and scenes and to the possible ambiguities that might not otherwise be given credence.

Conclusion

The prime knowledge the students carry away from such a course goes beyond the subject. They can use the approach in other courses—they can, bit by bit, build up a body of relevant information and come to some judgment. They do not so much learn a lesson as acquire a skill. By providing students with skills of investigation, by giving them confidence in their use of those skills, a teacher trains his students not in the ability to be taught but in the ability to learn.

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A FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO ME ON THE WAY TO ENGLISH I-A

Anyone who reads freshman compositions for a living knows that a certain percentage of them will be hilariously funny. Unintentionally, of course. In fact, it's a rare teacher of English who doesn't have a private collection of merry student gaffes; swapping them is one of the brighter moments of an otherwise dreary business. We all know that students can be witlessly, stupidly funny. But can they be intentionally funny? Can they write humor, comedy, or whimsy? If so, to what advantage?

Let me begin answering these questions by pointing out the obvious: most students who enter a freshman composition class are experts on virtually nothing. Their acquaintance with poetry, drama, or literary prose is likely to be a nodding one. Exposition has something to do with a World's Fair. But there is one literary genre about which they know a great deal, although their information is spectacularly formless. This is comedy. We are all bombarded with comedy. Television, radio, films, magazines, records—those communication media that absorb so much of the student's waking hours—vend humor of every conceivable shape and model. Laughter is certainly not new at the university, but never before have students been so ruthlessly pummeled by jokes.

Let us suppose that, instead of humor, students were assaulted during the greater part of the day with poetry. Wouldn't you suppose they would absorb a fair amount of the structure of poetic language, just as so many of our literary forefathers developed a rhythmic King Jamesian prose by being weaned and nurtured on the Bible? Students who enter college these days have wallowed in comedy for so long that they not only have a lively sense of what is funny, but often they know how to be funny. The rhetoric of comedy is certainly not easily mastered, but it is a fairly simple and straightforward rubric, and many students have unconsciously learned some of its rudiments and can use them skillfully. More important for the teacher—this rhetoric can be taught.

I am suggesting that students probably enter college knowing more about comedy than they do about Shakespeare and that this knowledge can afford the composition teacher a foothold on what is too often an otherwise perpendicular slab of ignorance. Writing humor, for those who are able to do it, gives the student an opportunity to draw from a specialized store of personal experience—one that is likely to be vividly remembered and excitingly retold because it was funny. Those who cannot write humor (the kind who write, "then 'man bit dog' as the saying goes, ha, ha") have a chance to relate familiar, deeply imprinted comic patterns to literary genres such as satire, humor, comedy, and wit. I am proposing, then, that teaching comedy to freshmen requires that the classic duality be preserved: those who can, write; those who can't, criticize.

Fortunately, there is an excellent paperback perfectly suited to this approach: *The Comic in Theory and Practice*, edited by John J. Enck, Elizabeth T. Forter, and Alvin Whitley.[1] For those not familiar with this collection, it is divided into two parts: one is a selection of excerpts from twenty-one comic theoreticians, ranging from Aristotle to Frye; the second part is an anthology of essays, narratives, and verse. The merit of this book is that in one volume it includes models for those students who wish to try writing comedy, and concise theoretical excerpts for applying critical standards to comic works. My own opinion is that it is much stronger on theory than on practice, and the instructor would probably want to supplement the latter section with assignments of his own.

Exactly how is comedy to be incorporated into a freshman composition course, then? First of all, an assignment in humor should probably not be made until the student has gotten most of the unintentional jokes out of his writing. The most appropriate place to deal with comedy would seem to be under style, but it is also possible to include assignments on comedy while discussing personal experience and logic. Teaching comedy and logic together is particularly useful since so much of the accidental laughter found in student writing springs from the incongruities and non sequiturs that accompany a logical breakdown.

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[1] (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1960).

Another paperback that might be considered is *Eight Great Comedies*, ed. Sylvan Barnet, Morton Berman, and William Burto (New York: Mentor, 1958). This inexpensive anthology of dramatic comedy includes criticism by Chesterton, Dobree, Frye and Langer.

For some typical assignments I would suggest the following:

1) Write a humorous or whimsical composition based on a true personal experience, using either Benchley or Thurber as a model.
2) Read one of the essays in Enck, and write an analysis of a humorous poem, play, or short story from the viewpoint of the theorist.
3) Write a critical analysis of a popular comedian or actor, using one of the assigned comic theories as a springboard. Several theories might be given to different students, each writing about a comedian from a single theoretical point of view.
4) Analyze a humorous poem, play, or short story using comic devices as a starting point. How many are used? What kind? A similar assignment could be done for satire, humor, and wit.
5) Read several theories of comedy, and write an essay pointing out the faults and virtues of each. Which one is most valid?
6) Write a short humorous monologue in the style of a popular comedian. These can be reproduced and distributed for criticism by other students.

These assignments should be much more specific than the generalized versions above. For example, in number 1 make it a personal experience with a bus driver or your mother's cooking. In numbers 3 and 6, name the comedian; in all assignments list specific critics, authors, and works. The papers should be read aloud whenever possible and criticized on the following points: Is it funny? Why or why not? What effect does the humor have in illuminating the theme? The discussions are almost guaranteed to be sure-fire hits, because comedy is exceeded only by sex in its ability to wrest students from their wonted lethargies.

For those who are interested in pyramiding sex and comedy, I cite my own experience with an assignment on Salinger's *Catcher*. For most students this was the first meeting with this ubiquitous novel, and the response was expectedly lively. But there was a vocal minority (mostly co-eds) who objected to Salinger's frequent use of the usual handful of objectionable words. Quickly inserting my foot into the door, I asked if the novel was funny, and everyone agreed that it was often side-splitting. Where? Light bulbs snapped on above several heads. Was the objectionable language related to the comedy? How? Why? At this point the trick is to send them off to Freud's *Wit and Its Relationship to the Unconscious* for some answers. Those of you who would like to try this approach and want something less shopworn than Salinger might take a crack at Southern and Hoffenberg's *Candy*—if you've got the nerve.

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A PRE-WRITING PLAN FOR REMEDIAL STUDENTS

Many students assigned to remedial (subfreshman) writing classes admit a fear of writing. Whatever its cause—inexperience, previous low grades, penalties for errors, low self-esteem, lack of ideas—the sight of a blank piece of paper which they know must be filled with meaningful writing and given a grade by the teacher is intimidating to these people.

Such students will not begin to write well until they begin to write with some ease. First, they need to become familiar with the physical process of writing, with actually holding a pen and covering a piece of paper with words. Next, they need to be assured that they are capable of writing down their ideas. Finally, they need to be encouraged to believe that what they write is important. The teacher of writing, then, must first assign himself the task of building up a student's confidence and of helping him to overcome fear of writing. Only later can a teacher introduce the sophisticated concept of original composition and expect the student to write successfully.

The process suggested here, one which has had success, takes the student in three gradual steps from simply filling a paper with markings to presenting the concept of structure in writing. It begins with simple doodling. The second step lets the student write a variety of assignments which have the single objective of getting words onto paper. Finally there are brief but highly structured writing exercises. By the time a student completes this last step he is prepared to write compositions because he has been shown that he is *capable* of writing them. In a sense, he has been initiated into the mystery of putting meaningful words on paper. Instead of "freezing" before a blank piece of paper, he is now assured of his ability to write and he *will* write.

Step 1. Doodling is the kind of paper-filling device most students are familiar with through long experience. Thus, it offers a good starting place for a planned program to overcome writing fears. The teacher can easily provide familiar conditions for doodling by reading aloud or delivering a brief lecture to the class. Instead of formal notes, students should be encouraged to put anything they want on the paper—pictures, designs, words only incidentally. Students should be assured that whatever they put on the paper is permissible, and the instructor may wish to announce that the papers will not be collected. Standing in front of the class, he can easily see which students are using pencils and which are not. The teacher may want to look over the papers, but he should honor a promise that they will not be collected. This step is partly a mechanical one (and, indeed, many find it highly unusual, if not laughable), partly a way of gaining the confidence of students.

Reluctant doodlers might be given some starting help. The teacher may suggest standard shapes to be recorded on a piece of paper: a square, a triangle, a figure eight, a particular number. Students can then be encouraged to use these as the bases for designs or pictures. This method is helpful for two groups of people. Those students who have no way of starting themselves find it useful to proceed once a shape has been given them. The other group, those who have particularly creative or vivid imaginations, are challenged to find something unusual to do with a standard shape.

Step 2. The next step from pictures or doodles is to have the students start putting words on paper. The teacher should emphasize strongly at this point that he is concerned with only one thing: getting words out of the mind, through the hand, and onto a piece of paper. Subjects, grammar—even sense—are of no importance.

The assignments suggested here are progressively more difficult, but they should all be undertaken with both students and teacher agreeing to the following conditions:

a) The exercises will not be graded, though the teacher may look at them.
b) There is no space or word limit for the exercises. As writing becomes easier, there will be more words written in a given amount of time, but quantity is not a consideration and no "goals" are implied.
c) Mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and paragraphing are not important at this point. Students should do whatever comes most naturally.

Exercise A. The first step is to *write anything that comes to mind*—annoyance at this assignment, a description of something in the classroom, remarks about last night's date. Skipping from one subject to another, even though sentences or thoughts remain unfinished, is entirely permissible. Each student must be convinced that *what* he decides to write in this exercise is unimportant; it does not even have to make sense.

Students should also be instructed not to stop writing while thinking of something to say; if anyone feels at a standstill, he should repeat the last word several times until he can think of something else to write.

The purpose of this exercise is to get students physically accustomed to the process of writing. Surprisingly, though, a reading of many such papers shows ideas already organized into form which would be acceptable compositions early in a term. Perhaps the freedom of not having to strive for a grade automatically improves writing. The therapeutic value of this exercise is that students see they can readily fill a piece of paper with words. Moreover, they are writing without regard for the very thing which inhibits the work of many remedial students: fear of error for which they will be penalized.

Exercise B. Once students are able to write random thoughts with ease, they are ready for encouragement to write in some structured way. *Retelling stories*, either those read or those seen in the movies and on television, is a second step. Because they are already structured, stories provide a ready-made framework of organization. Besides, since the students have for years been telling friends the plots of movies or TV programs, an assignment to retell a story in writing is not overwhelmingly difficult for even the lowest level remedial student.

Showing a short (about five minutes) film with a strong story line is another storytelling exercise possibility. Its value is that each student is given the same information at the same time and everyone, therefore, starts on the same basis. Some suitable films are "Icarus and Daedalus" (Sterling Educational Films), "A Place in the Sun" (Encyclopaedia Britannica Films), and "A Scrap of Paper, A Piece of String" (Contemporary Films). Instead of imposing the difficult task of interpretation on students, only the simple retelling of what happened on the screen a few minutes before is required. (It is also a good exercise in notetaking.)

Another possibility is to have students retell a child's story they know well. If the teacher stresses that subject matter is less important than putting words on paper and that details of the stories are inconsequential to this exercise so they need not strain to remember, students are not resentful even of such juvenile material.

Exercise C. Original writing is somewhat more difficult for most students than retelling a story. In this next step, students may *keep a diary* *or journal.* The habit of writing is the real aim of this exercise, so keeping a regular record should be stressed. (In *Hooked on Books*, Daniel Fader describes some amazing results of having students keep journals.[1])

Because many remedial students feel more comfortable with objective than with subjective materials, the teacher may encourage them to write initially about activities rather than about ideas. Keeping a diary for even a few days has a benefit even beyond the custom of writing: it encourages students to become more observant, a quality they will need to cultivate in order to write good quality compositions.

Let students progress from the objective to the subjective in keeping the diary. The teacher should set a time for them to begin recording impressions, attitudes, and ideas as well as factual accounts. They may be encouraged to record a reaction to a new acquaintance, as well as to describe his physical appearance. Their writing will begin to show more sensitivity and less self-consciousness because they will continue to concentrate on getting words onto paper. Also, by this time the students will have begun to have a sense of assurance about writing which cannot be achieved through other methods.

Exercise D. Letters to either real or imaginary people are a less personal type of writing and therefore excellent to introduce at this point. It is a helpful way to begin necessary training in viewing the world as more than what the student himself sees or thinks. This assignment allows for much imagination, while still an exercise in getting thought to flow freely and in overcoming fear of writing.

Students may write a letter to a character in a book or movie, to a musician they admire, to a political figure they disagree with, to an actual friend, or to a local newspaper editor or columnist. They could write letters asking for information or ordering something completely outrageous. Or they could simply write a letter to "get something off their chest" to someone at home or at school.

The knowledge that this letter is only another one of a series of varied writing the student tries before he starts writing for grades or for the teacher's approval is sufficient to elicit enthusiastic response to this assignment. Should the teacher want to read these letters as progress indicators, he might suggest they be written anonymously in order to abide by the initial three-point agreement with students.

To prevent students from saying they don't know what subject to write about, the teacher may want to make several suggestions about topics to the class. When students are then permitted open discussion for additional topic suggestions, enthusiasm for the assignment is generated and enough suggestions will be received to give all class members a choice.

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[1] Daniel N. Fader and E. B. McNeil, *Hooked on Books: Program & Proof* (New York: Berkley Publishing Corp., S1508).

Exercise E. Finally, students may be asked to *write an original essay or short story*, still bearing in mind that the most important thing is to get words onto paper. Essay writing is usually not looked upon as a very difficult assignment after the previous practice, and students readily choose a subject. They are no longer reluctant to record observations and impressions because they have had much writing experience before doing this exercise. Also, after all the previous exercises, most realize that unity of subject is an essential element in writing a successful composition, even though development or even logic may be lacking in their attempts.

The more original and adventurous students in the class may be encouraged to write a story. Since this form is an exercise calling for their own creativity and imagination, many who feel more comfortable in escapes from reality—or who fancy themselves "above" nonfiction writing—will want to try it. Plot, characterization, setting, and all the other qualities by which teachers evaluate a short story are irrelevant here; only the actual writing of words on paper is the criterion upon which any judgment, whether by teacher or student, can be made.

Step 3. After being led to write words on paper with ease, students are prepared to write with structure. However, instead of being told that hereafter they will have to organize their ideas in logical sequence—a thoroughly frightening thought to most remedial students who are probably in the class because they have not heretofore been able to organize and structure writing—the method used successfully in this series of steps is to introduce writing by means of some simple fill-in forms.

The student is called upon to do little more than fill in blanks, a custom he has become acquainted with in everything from applications for admittance to school to orders for merchandise. Although filling in blanks is a familiar activity, the assignment using them should not be given before some of the previously outlined exercises. For unless he has mastered the exercises comprising Step 2, the student will not be ready to work later without the structural form.

These highly structured forms should be very short at first. They should ask relatively little of the student—merely that he fill in words and a few simple phrases. Later, the teacher may present an unfinished structured form and allow students to complete it without aids.

Here is an example of an imaginative assignment using the highly structured form:

> DIRECTIONS: Fill in the blanks with words or phrases to make a story, either real or imaginary, either serious or humorous. Make sure that all tenses are in the past.
>
> As I was walking ______________, I noticed a boy who ______________. His face was ______________ and I saw that he wore ______________. But the most outstanding feature about this ______________ boy was that he ______________. My curiosity was so aroused that ______________. Of course, I felt that I really should ______________. My ______________ proved to be ______________ because he ______________. Then I ______________ and ______________.

An example of another highly structured form designed to help students overcome fear of writing exemplifies the sort of standard expository form remedial students will be taught to write by themselves later in the term.

> INSTRUCTIONS: Fill in the blanks with words or phrases to make a complete paragraph. Select one word you wish to put in the first space and serve as the subject for the paragraph. Suggestions (you may use any of these) are: cars, women, fish, resorts, shoppers, chairs, teachers, friends. Where there is a choice of words in parentheses, circle the correct one to fit the subject of the paragraph.
>
> There are three kinds of ______________. One kind is called the ______________ and is noted for (its, his, her) ______________. (It, He, She) can be found ______________ where (it, he, she) usually ______________. Another kind of ______________ is the ______________ (which, who) is (more, less) ______________ than the ______________. (It, He, She) also is ______________ but doesn't ______________. The third kind of ______________ is ______________, (which, who) is noted for ______________ and ______________. My favorite kind of ______________ is ______________ because ______________.

A helpful follow-up to these structured forms is to have a student recopy the entire paragraph in his own writing. The student then must actually write the complete paragraph; in doing so he gets the feel of what it is to write coherently and logically. The repetition also gives him a chance to be more critical of his own work and to review not only the words he has chosen, to be sure they make sense, but also to look at spelling and other mechanics.

In addition to recopying a piece of structured writing, students may be asked to add phrases and even sentences of their own in order to amplify what has already been written. This freedom and encouragement have led some students to realize that what begins as a paragraph can be developed into a theme through the addition of details. The above example of the expository structure, for instance, has been augmented by some students until it consists of separate paragraphs for each of the three kinds of cars or women or fish or whatever subject was selected. The resultant themes have been organized well enough to satisfy the most demanding teachers.

The methods of helping remedial students overcome their fear of writing outlined here take time to complete with a class. But it is a flexible program. The individual exercises can be followed as suggested, or they can be varied to suit specific teacher and student requirements. They may be used at the very beginning of a remedial writing class term or in conjunction with regular class work, the teacher devoting a short time at regular intervals to this program. Some work may be done in class and some outside of class, depending upon the teacher's desires.

The advantage of following this series of gradual steps is that it leads a student to discovering for himself that writing is not an overwhelmingly awesome task. Rather, it is one at which he *can succeed.* When the student is brought inductively to this awareness because he has been led to it gradually and with success at each step, the student is also brought to the realization that he need no longer have a fear of writing. The teacher is then free to develop the student's writing potential.

IV. MISCELLANY

MISCELLANY

The four articles in this section do not seem to fit especially well into any of the three preceding categories and for that reason are grouped here. They present a variety of approaches to successful teaching of the language arts.

"The Teaching of Form and Organization to Elementary School Children" describes a project aimed at recognizing order, form, and design in speaking and writing. Participants were twenty fifth and sixth grade students.

"A Workable Nongraded Language Arts Program for Senior High Schools" lists curricular offerings as well as twenty-one advantages as seen by the author. The plan is flexible enough to be useful in a variety of ways.

"A Short Description of Priem" sets forth in detail a program of individualized English methods.

"Machines and the Man" is a useful description of the uses of machines, such as overhead projector and motion picture projector, in English classes.

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THE TEACHING OF FORM AND ORGANIZATION TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Can upper elementary school boys and girls be assisted in recognizing order, form, and design in speaking and writing? This was the question in the teacher's mind as she confronted twenty fifth and sixth grade boys and girls in the demonstration group for the NDEA Institute on Composition at West Georgia College in the summer of 1965. The teacher's concern for teaching organization and form grew out of the conviction (1) that many persons go through public school without being able, after reading a short paper or listening to a short talk, to name the main points and (2) that although outlining is a regular part of most English curricula, a large percentage of children and adults as well do not precede the preparation of a talk or the writing of a paper by listing the main topics to be discussed. Can the teaching of these matters of organization be improved? This was the teacher's question.

At the first meeting of the group, the boys and girls were asked to listen to a tape entitled "My Three Wishes." They were asked to list the three main points of that talk as they heard it. These papers were taken up and not returned to the students, nor was the talk discussed with them in any way at that time.

The pupils were questioned about their collections. It developed that eighteen of the twenty were making a collection of some kind. Each child was asked to turn in a slip of paper giving his name and the collection he was making. Those students not making a collection were asked to indicate one which they would be interested in making or that they might imagine they were making. The next day the bulletin board carried a summary of the collections and the names of the children interested in each. That day the boys and girls were asked to list at least two and no more than four points which they would like to discuss in telling the class about their collections. On the third day the boys and girls began making their talks. The teacher in the meanwhile had checked with each child briefly about his listing of points, assisting when need was indicated. She then prepared transparencies of the outlines which had been submitted, and as the pupils made their talks she flashed their listing of points on the screen. This enabled the boys and girls to see whether the speaker was keeping to his points. It also assisted the speaker in limiting his remarks to his topics.

The next day the class was given a short descriptive paper of four paragraphs. Each paragraph had the topic sentence as the first one. The boys and girls were asked to list the main points in this paper. When they finished, a transparency showing the four main points was flashed on the screen. The boys and girls were asked to examine the article with the assistance of the teacher and the outline on the screen. This type of activity was continued on three succeeding days using different short articles, but the topic sentence was not always the first. In each instance the students were asked to list the main points of the article. After the papers were collected, the pupils and teacher examined together the transparency showing the basic outline of the paper.

The pupils had been asked at the first class meeting to list outstanding experiences on an "I Remember" list. The pupils had enjoyed sharing some of these memories with the class orally. Now they were asked to select one topic from their "I Remember" list and write down no fewer than two and no more than four points which they would like to discuss in a written paper. After being given some assistance in this outline, the boys and girls were asked to write that experience in class.

In the meanwhile, the talks on collections had been completed, and the teacher had prepared a tape listing three benefits from collecting. This talk, entitled "What Collecting Means to Us," was played for the class, and each student was asked to list the main points. After the papers had been collected, a transparency of the basic outline of the tape was flashed on the screen. The tape was replayed, and the class as a whole examined the outline.

As an experience in rapid reading, the boys and girls were given a single sheet containing five paragraphs on an American hero. The topic sentence was the first in each paragraph. The pupils were asked to read only the first sentence in each paragraph, to put the article aside, and to write on a separate sheet the answers to brief questions flashed on the screen. When the pupils had finished, they and the teacher discussed the answers to the questions showing that the reading of only the first sentence gave them the information needed. Then they read each paragraph and saw that the remaining sentences supported and amplified the topic sentence.

In a second talk, the pupils described some person of their own choosing. In preparation each child listed the points he wished to make and was scheduled to give his talk only after his points had been checked by the teacher. This time the class was not given the outline from which each child planned to speak but was asked to list the points as the description was given. After each talk, the speaker's outline was revealed, and the class evaluated the degree to which he followed it.

During the first part of the last week of the summer session, the teacher taped a talk which outlined three accomplishments of the summer. The class was asked, as it listened to this talk entitled "Our Summer Class in Composition," to list the main points. This proved to be a more difficult tape than the others in that, although it included an introductory and a concluding paragraph, the three main points were not listed as such in either the introductory or the concluding paragraph. Again the outline was flashed on the screen, and the talk was replayed.

On the last day of the class the first talk, "My Three Wishes," was played again, and again the pupils were asked to list the main points. This time the outline was flashed on the screen, and the pupils and teacher together examined the talk in the light of its outline.

Progress was made by these boys and girls in recognizing main points in writing and in speaking. Only 48 percent right responses were made at the first playing of the first tape, "My Three Wishes"; 76 percent were made on the taped talk on "What Collecting Gives Us"; and 100 percent correct responses were made on the last playing of "My Three Wishes." Only 40 percent correct responses were made on the more difficult talk, "Our Summer Class in Composition." Responses to the first written paper gave 69 percent correct answers, while those to the second written paper gave 81 percent correct answers. The record of correct responses on the third and fourth written papers is not now available.

The boys and girls were together for only 50 minutes for 28 sessions. During this short period of time, it was impossible to do as complete teaching of outlining as would be desired. For instance, the matter of subtopics was not dealt with; the numbering of an outline was taught only by example. Still there is little doubt in the mind of the teacher or the forty participants of the NDEA Institute on Elementary Composition that these twenty boys and girls will be much more conscious of main points as they write, as they speak, and as they listen than they were before this summer school experience.

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A WORKABLE NONGRADED LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The following schedule of curricular offerings can be set up under present operating conditions in the average high school classroom (with the same students, rooms, textbooks, bell schedules, grading periods, and requirements for graduation). The offerings above the line can be accommodated in large-group sections; the last groupings of offerings benefit from small classes, made possible by the large-group situations. A college-catalog-type listing follows:

EL	(English literature)	SS-1	(short story—world)
		SS-2	(short story—American)
		D-1	(drama—Shakespearean)
		D-2	(drama—American)
		D-3	(drama—world)
		D-4	(drama—musical)
		EA	(essays—articles)
		B-1	(English or world biography)
		B-2	(American biography)
		P-1	(American lyric poetry)
		P-2	(English lyric poetry)
		P-3	(epic poetry)
		P-4	(narrative poetry)
		N-1	(American novel)
		N-2	(English novel)
		B	(Bible—literary appreciation)
		M	(mythology)
EIR	(library-individual research)		(dictionary, thesaurus, word books, encyclopedias, periodical indexes, vertical files)

EH	(history of language)		(particularly Indo-European heritage, comparison of Germanic and romance languages)
EV	(vocabulary building)		(prefixes, suffixes, stems–Latin, Greek, other)

ES	(orthography)		(drill, mnemonic devices, rules to aid spellers)
EPC	(punctuation, capitalization)		(usage, current rules and practices)
ECW	(creative writing)	SS	(short story)
		EA	(exposition–essays, articles)
		P	(poetry)
ER	(rhetoric)	P	(order and development of the paragraph)
		L	(logic in composition, advertising, reasoning)
		C	(the longer composition–outlining, organization, transition, introduction and conclusion)
EB	(business)	LE	(letter writing, filling out forms, brief reports, memos)
EG	(grammar)	V	(verbs–recognition, forms, use)
		VB	(verbals–recognition, forms, use)
		CL	(clauses–recognition, forms, use)
		S	(sentences–types, purpose, use)
		M	(modifiers–recognition, forms, use)
		C	(connectives–recognition and use)

Is it likely that a convenient strategy conceived in the Middle Ages (1537) in a gymnasium at Strassburg, Germany, is still the best of all ideas as a basis for a modern English curriculum? Is there somewhere a better plan than the graded program? Could there possibly be more than coincidence in the following two statements:

> Of all the disciplines in the public school, the English program suffers most as being in a "muddled state of intellectual disrepair."[1]

and

> English is the most hamstrung by the concept of a "graded" program.

This proposal answers affirmatively these questions and offers a brave, new plan for a brave new world of English. The accompanying schedule catalogs courses offered over a three-year period. Courses listed above the line need not all be offered concurrently if size and facilities of the high school do not accommodate this.

Perhaps the working of the plan can best be explained by listing advantages of the program:

—Literature classes can be taught in large groups by a teacher, a specialist in the field, with assistance when seminars follow lectures. This allows more teachers for remedial "basics."
—Basics, limited to under twenty students, start at the beginning and are programed, step-by-step learning.
—All courses are clearly defined, specific, and in depth. No student is subjected to concentrated attack on already mastered skills.
—All courses are short-ranged (four to six weeks) so that term failure because of one course is impossible. Also, if repetition is desired in a basic program, the student may repeat the next six weeks.
—Basics afford student the opportunity to eliminate already diagnosed weaknesses as indicated by standardized achievement tests.
—Burden of responsibility for self-improvement is placed on the student, where it belongs. He is living in a world of choice-making; perhaps he needs more experience in this than in any other one thing.
—Student enters a class because he is motivated to take a particular subject at a particular time. A boy in love can learn to write a sonnet to his girl; he enrolls in the creative writing course. A student, knowing he lacks the know-how to write a research paper demanded in another course, enrolls in the rhetoric course designed for this purpose. A student can enroll in a novel course and still not elect to read *Silas Marner* or *Julius Caesar* or whatever.
—Homogeneity occurs through motivation, not IQ or ability. All students are "less able" in some areas. This means eliminating the deadening, lusterless "low" sections.
—Wide choices of enrichment (literature) courses reward students with few basic weaknesses.
—Short period, wide range of offerings, student choices allow collision course of student with course offering.
—No teacher must "master" all of the thirty-five offerings but may instruct in area of strengths. End of bluffing!

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[1] B. Frank Brown, *The Appropriate Placement School: A Sophisticated Nongraded Curriculum* (West Nyack, N.Y. Parker Publishing Company, Inc.), pp. 101, 102.

—As aide in large-group literature offerings, the teacher has unprecedented opportunity for inservice training (instruction) in his own areas of shady information. He observes student response as well as informed instruction. Can a better combination be devised for inservice?

—Better choice of texts and fewer texts result from short-range specific courses. Students lug one text to class. Short courses mean that same textbooks can be used six times in one year rather than once. Savings effected will allow purchase of superior paperbacks, current periodicals for the essay courses, individual (class sets) dictionaries where needed.

—This plan acknowledges English not as one discipline but many. Reading was so important that it was eliminated completely—to be treated as a separate discipline for all students.

—The three remaining disciplines—literature, rhetoric, and grammar—have been treated as courses of intrinsic worth to be mastered. Their interrelation has not been ignored, however. Students enrolled in literature courses will write, discuss, rewrite. However, the course will not become ambiguous, teaching both literature and the craft of writing at the same time. Students who have no concept of the paragraph should take the short course on paragraphing.

—This program settles the question of grammar by offering the science of grammar. Structural concepts should strengthen courses on verbs, connectives, nouns (noun clusters, etc.). Generative concepts should strengthen courses on clauses, phrases (subordination devices). Acknowledging the worth of grammar will strengthen not only the other disciplines in the English program (especially the writing program) but will extend language concepts useful in grasping foreign languages.

—Creative writing has value for all students: catharsis, therapy, outlet of delight, joy, or sorrow. Motivation enters in here, however, and the short-range, specific course offerings should afford artistic creation but many side dividends as well. Repetition is also possible for additional credit. For the first time, creativity can be encouraged on the part of any interested student—without serious penalty of failure.

—The vocabulary course, offered for a short period, can use aids, such as workbooks, flashcards, dictionaries, books of etymology, that are not available in an ordinary classroom. Reusable every six weeks or so, quality of materials will affect quality of instruction. Also, the advantages of a study of Latin and Greek can be realized without studying the language—a long acknowledged fact as yet practically unexploited.

—Students may schedule a year's program in English in the spring before the fall term. Cataloging subjects offered should assist in the choice-making. This should minimize changing schedules later on.

—Every English teacher assigned a class in September should keep "homeroom" responsibility for recording of grades. Semester average should be determined by the grades of courses taken. Standardized test scores should appear for student appraisal and self-evaluation. These scores should influence his decisions in planning the next year's work.

—Graphs, charts, guidance furnished by counselors after standardized tests are given should be incorporated in the catalog, thus providing a student a means for determining objectively his needs.

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A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF PRIEM

Priem, *Pr*ogram of *I*ndividualized *E*nglish *M*ethods, is a complete English program for any grade from second through college. Although it has developed in one classroom at Granger (Washington) High School, it can be adapted to a large district program. Any number of its parts can be used according to the amount of available time, the needs of the students, and the expertise of the teacher.

Priem does not pretend to be an original program. Rather it is one that puts to use tenets previously advanced by research and such well-known educators as Veatch (6), Neill (5), and Montessori (4)—and confirmed in the behavior of my students.

Although the program is being tried out in several ways, it has not yet been researched; therefore no scientific proof of its efficacy is available. Whatever evidence I offer has been obtained through observation of students and teachers practicing the program.

Five general features of Priem set it apart from the average program of group instruction. First, selection of material and procedures has been made on the basis of student reaction more than on the basis of teacher reaction or what a teacher thinks is "good for the student." It is the antithesis of the statement I heard from an English teacher at a professional meeting: "I know more about what is good for a student than any student does!" Priem assumes that no one knows better than the student whether he will learn and when and how. Priem assumes that the cooperation of students in the educational endeavor is an essential and that the way must be kept open for the use of this resource.

The second general feature is its encouragement of a problem-solving attitude which works to improve both the program and student achievement.

Third, the program uses the observation that students do better and are more comfortable doing it if standards are set out in plain sight, if they know how they can attain whatever they decide to attain, and if they know just how they stand at any time. In other words, they do better if they are completely aware of their involvement in the program.

The fourth feature of the program is that the standards for each phase of English are so set up in a series that any student is able to achieve at his level and then move along as he learns.

The fifth unusual feature is what might be called the conference method. Conferences are always going on. They are on books read, midterm problems, and many other concerns that students have. Most are student initiated; some are called by the teacher. Any teaching becomes a private lesson by means of the conference. The graduates often visit by plunking down in the same chair that they once used as a launch pad for opinions on one subject or another.

If a teacher operates the full program, he will have seven aspects of English going during the quarter: wide reading practice; literary criticism; oral work consisting of composition, discussion and/or acting, and oral usage—which is optional; written composition; vocabulary study; a language project; and problem solving of English learning problems. Because most of these read like the content of other English programs, I shall show briefly how each differs from the usual:

1. Wide reading is truly wide reading for two reasons. Students choose to read any material they wish with their parents' consent, so there is a wide range of subject matter. Second, the standards are such that a great quantity of reading must be done for top grades. At present the standards are set at 4,500 points for 100 percent *A*. A point equals one half page of list book reading. Other books earn less per page.
2. To practice literary criticism the student chooses one element of criticism that he understands to show the teacher. He uses the book that he has read to prove his understanding. This is done in conference.
3. Oral work
    - 3a. Oral composition shows his ability to organize his literary criticism report in satisfactory order and with meaning.
    - 3b. Oral usage is optional because who is to say which particular dialect is "correct."
    - 3c. Discussion alternates between T-Group discussion and acting of various kinds. Since group communication is our aim, the grade is a group one.
4. Written composition is quite permissive—no assigned topics, no lessons in how to do it. The writing series has five levels of ability beginning with mere copying of material as mentioned in *Hooked on Books* (2) and ranging to long nonfiction and fiction pieces of as much as ten chapters.

5. Vocabulary study for college bound or their equivalents, study the same words and the synonyms for a whole quarter. Weekly tests in varied form are given over and over, to be taken as often as desired. Students not ready for this difficult word study write instead, using the *Hooked on Books* idea.
6. Language study is optional. The student selects any language project he wishes from a list in his handbook or from life itself. Anything he does is added to what has been done before. For instance, if he collects logographs, they must be new ones not yet on our cumulative list.
7. Problem solving begins at the midpoint of each quarter. The student selects one aspect of English in which he is below 95 percent to try to improve. His grade reflects his improvement.

A student binder has been developed to explain the program to the student and to offer the study material. A list of its contents follows:

1. A set standard sheet of rules developed for the program over the years.
2. An explanation of the phases of the writing series and the grading standards used. These were taken from Diederich's (1) article and revised by Alan Purves a year ago.
3. A list of composition skills which students may try for extra credit.
4. An explanation of the purpose and procedures of problem solving, as well as a list of problem-solving concepts.
5. Lists of possible language projects.
6. Literary criticism pages with blue for fiction, yellow for nonfiction, pink for drama, green for short stories, and orange for poetry.
7. A page explaining how students are encouraged to read the Great Books.
8. Four pages showing how the student is advancing in his reading:
   - 8a. A mountain with flags at various altitude levels. When a student leaves his sports books and moves to adult material such as Hemingway and Steinbeck, we fill in flags at that level. The next level represents difficult Great Book fiction such as Shakespeare and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. The most difficult reading at the very top of the mountain is Great Book nonfiction.
   - 8b. A time line where we put titles read that extend the student's understandings in time.
   - 8c. A subject page—to show what kinds of subjects the reading is illuminating.
   - 8d. A listing of countries to show understanding of place.
9. A list of more than a thousand books for which students have earned two points per page.
10. A list of authors whose every work will be worth two points per page. This list is that given by Fine in *How to Be Accepted by the College of Your Choice* (3) as being read by students who scored highest on various tests.
11. A "Point Credit Guide" which explains how credit is figured for the reading.

12. Two sheets of the binder are different for each new quarter and are slipped in at the back; one is the grade sheet, and the other is the vocabulary study sheet.

Many seniors pay the small price of thirty-five cents for their binders so that they can take them to college with them.

Priem makes radical assumptions about the teaching of English. Some of them are listed below:

1. Students know best what books they are ready to read.
2. If students are encouraged to read widely books of their own choice, their taste and reading ability will improve.
3. If a reader is ready for a piece of literature, he needs no explication, no help from a teacher.
4. The whole book as written by the author should be read, not parts or anthologized versions.
5. It is better for the student if he reads the book than if his teacher reads it to him.
6. Traditional book reporting procedures and class treatment of literature have allowed bright students to get through school without reading a book.
7. Group teaching of literature leads to dependency and stifling of creative, individual interpretation of literature.
8. The teacher must come down from his podium, give up showmanship, and give this time to students in conference.
9. Students, not the teacher, should decide how to use their class time.
10. Students should keep track of their grades, know how they stand.
11. A survey course, though logical, takes the enjoyable and significant act of synthesis away from the student.
12. Student-initiated topics for discussion and writing are more important than those assigned by the teacher.
13. Work with language should renew students' natural interest in the miracle of language, now worn to a point of revulsion.
14. Group discussion, unled, will show communication growth.

Graduates of Priem are encouraged to stop by to tell what needs improving and to give any bouquets appropriate. If the suggestions for improvement are workable, the changes are made. The favorable comments run like these two: (1) I feel I can tackle anything—especially in the line of reading. The program gives me confidence. (2) It gave me a broad background and developed diverse interests.

Most of the favorable comments add up to the idea that the students were able to adjust. The problem-solving aspect may be the secret weapon, but having the reading power to back it up certainly would be a great help.

This has been a very short picture of the Priem program. Since it has been developing for eleven years, it is much too much to put into 2,000 words. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Washington in Olympia, through Dr. Al Metcalf and Tom Barton, has encouraged the program's development in numerous ways. One is the publication of a few copies of a detailed description. Those interested should write to one of these men for a description.

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MACHINES AND THE MAN: A GUIDE TO INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS

We English teachers often tend to be apprehensive about machines. Stalwarts on the side of humanism, the spiritual heirs of Shelley, Dickens, and Ionesco, we often see ourselves as the defenders of the transcendental human spirit against the dark forces of pragmatism and progress. In the view of many a teacher, the machine is the physical embodiment of the debasement of humanity in the twentieth century—he wants no part of it. "I never could work those tape things," sniffs a teacher (he drives a massively complicated automobile). I knew an English teacher once who refused to use her electric typewriter because, she said, it growled at her.

It is time, however—it is well past time—that we begin to see this prejudice against things mechanical as the foolish fancy it really is. Machines are merely extensions of human capabilities; they are tools, not organisms. There is much value in the use of audiovisual instructional equipment; to ignore it is to deprive ourselves and our students of some of the tools of knowledge.

We ought, therefore, to look very carefully at instructional equipment, to play with it a bit, and to find out what it can and cannot do for us. They are wonderful things, these machines, and should not be overlooked. This brief essay is intended as a guide to those interested in the use of instructional equipment and an encouragement to those who suspect that the machine might be after their jobs.

The very simplest piece of equipment for the teacher is an overhead projector. It is a good item to start with, if you are suspicious of machines, because it is very easy to operate (one switch and one focus attachment are all there is to it; it will positively not explode or even whine at you), and it is an excellent aid to instruction in grammar and composition. Use the overhead projector instead of the chalkboard for showing exercises and samples; it saves time and effort. Have a transparency made of a student composition (block out the name), and then write your corrections on it in view of the class. If you have a class small enough for group discussion, ask for student comment on the paper. You can also obtain several excellent commercially produced transparency series for grammar and composition.

Sisters to the overhead projector are the slide projector and the opaque projector. The opaque projector will take any picture or written page and project it onto the screen, without need for special transparencies. Its advantage is that it will project anything that can be fitted into its slot; its disadvantage, that one cannot write or draw on the original while it is in the machine. Although the picture obtained from the slide projector has more clarity and definition than that of the opaque projector, the opaque is useful when facilities for slide projection are not readily available.

The teacher must beware, however, of using either the overhead, the opaque, or the slide projector for more than short periods. It is physiologically very difficult for the human eye to remain focused on a bright, immobile object. After a very short time, the class will be looking at everything except the image on the screen.

One of my most searing introductions to the use of audiovisual equipment came the day I visited a high school and was proudly shown their latest innovation: an auditorium filled with two hundred students, one teacher, and one overhead projector. The atmosphere was dark and close, the pencil moved slowly around the screen, and for a full hour that disembodied voice droned at us out of the darkness. The experience was restful but hardly educative.

Poetry is written for the ear, not the eye, and plays were meant to be played—yet many teachers deal with poems and plays as though they exist only on the printed page. The diverse wealth of material available on tape and records is staggering: a class can hear Judith Anderson play Medea, E. E. Cummings read his own poetry, or Tyrone Power read Byron's poetry. The best general source of information on available recordings is the Schwann record catalog, which lists monthly all long-play records currently available. You may purchase a copy of the Schwann catalog from your local record dealer (sometimes he will give you a copy, in the interest of public relations). There is no really adequate catalog of tape recordings as yet, but the Harrison tape catalog might prove useful, as would a check of the *Educational Media Index.*[1]

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[1] (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1964).

With sound equipment as with projection, exercise caution: it is difficult to sit quietly and listen for a long period of time when the eyes are not engaged. Try to give the students something to look at as they listen, if only a copy of the script.

A combination of sound and image often solves the problem of galloping boredom. Some wonderful things may be done with the combination of tape and slide: pictures of Elizabethan England concurrent with songs of the period, for example, or modern art in conjunction with electronic music. Some slide projectors have an attachment for a tape recorder so that a pre-set signal on the tape will automatically change the picture. The investment of time and effort in preparing one of these tape-slide presentations is considerable, but the material is worth it, considering that it can be used over and over for class after class.

The recorder part of a tape recorder can be as useful as the playback mechanism. Tape a student's speech, a group discussion, or one of your own lectures; it can then be played back in private for critical review. The tape recorder is a superb instrument for teaching composition to a student who needs special help, particularly the student whose essays reflect poor language patterns. Have a student read his work into the tape recorder and then listen to it. In almost all cases, the reaction is "That is not what I meant to say at all!" Many students simply do not recognize the relationship between the spoken and written word; the tape recorder is a means of demonstrating that relationship.

The piece of equipment most frequently used in classrooms is the motion picture projector, for film is one of the most versatile and stimulating of the educational media. Few moments are better in a classroom than when an educational film manages to delight as it instructs or a fine performance on film brings to life speeches which lay dead in the anthology. The motion picture is among the most useful teaching aids available to the English instructor; a good film works to broaden the knowledge and experience of students who have frequently known nothing beyond the boundaries of their own city or the limits of their own prejudices.

Remember, too, that there are projectors especially made for sale to educational institutions, and these are easy to operate while almost indestructible. Ten minutes' instruction, and you can run your own projector: knowledge is power.

"Avoid any film that begins with a man sitting at a desk in front of a bookcase" is a piece of advice not far wrong. There is nothing more deadly than an educational film that opens with a shot of the lecturer and remains focused on his face. Here, as with most educational experiences, your own reactions during the preview are your best guide: if you find yourself casting sidelong glances at the projector to see how much longer the film must run before it's over, forget it.

The sources of films are many and varied, but there are several aids to locating good ones. The *Educational Media Index*, previously mentioned, is useful, as are the Landers Film Reviews (4930 Coliseum Street, Los Angeles, California 90016) and the Film Evaluation Guide of the Educational Film Library Association (250 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019). By far the best of the catalogs is the new *Index to 16mm Educational Films*, produced by the National Information Center for Educational Media (University of Southern California, University Park, Los Angeles, California 90007).

Commercially produced films are sometimes as useful to the teacher as films made specifically for educational purposes; besides, commercial films are often more interesting. Often the film version of an assigned story or play is available for showing to your class, and there are some shining examples of films which remain faithful to the intents of the authors. Some literature is available on commercial motion pictures in the English classroom, notably the NCTE's *The Motion Picture and the Teaching of English*.[2] Unfortunately, there is no single catalog of commercially produced films available for rental to educational institutions, and the interested teacher must check the catalogs of individual distributors. A good place to start might be the listings of the Film-Makers' Cooperative and Film-Makers' Distribution Center (175 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10010). There are many excellent individual firms. A review of the magazines devoted to film production, such as *Film World* (672 South Lafayette Park Place, Los Angeles, California 90057), and the periodicals which deal with the educational use of film, such as *Media and Methods* (134 North Thirteenth, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107), would also be helpful.

There are, of course, many more kinds of equipment and other sources of materials than those described here; this is but the introduction to a vast subject. It is vital that we remember that audiovisual aids are the tools of the teacher, not his replacement. Imaginatively and thoughtfully used, they can stretch the classroom experience. We may admire the illuminated manuscript, but we use the mass-produced textbook. These new instructional media may do as much for the twentieth century classroom as the printing press did for the seventeenth.

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[2] Marion C. Sheridan, *et al.* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965).